

EFFINGHAM COUNTY

Comprehensive Plan

Including the Cities of
Guyton, Rincon and Springfield



COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

EFFINGHAM COUNTY Comprehensive Plan



Including the Cities of **Guyton, Rincon and Springfield**

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COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Contents

Introduction

Identification of Potential Issues and Opportunities

- I. Population Change**
- II. Economic Development**
- III. Natural and Cultural Resources**
- IV. Community Facilities and Services**
- V. Housing**
- VI. Land Use**
- VII. Transportation**
- VIII. Intergovernmental Coordination**

Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

- I. Existing Land Use**
- II. Areas Requiring Special Attention**
 - Natural and cultural resources*
 - Areas where rapid development is likely to occur*
 - Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of public facilities and services*
 - Redevelopment areas*
 - Large abandoned structures or sites*
 - Infill development opportunities*
 - Areas of significant disinvestment and/or under-utilized area*
- III. Recommended Character Areas**

Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives (QCOs)

- I. Development Patterns**
 - Traditional Neighborhoods*
 - Infill Development*
 - Sense of Place*
 - Transportation Alternatives*
 - Regional Identity*
- II. Resource Conservation**
 - Heritage Preservation*
 - Open Space Preservation*

- Environmental Protection*
- III. Social and Economic Development**
 - Growth Preparedness*
 - Appropriate Businesses*
 - Employment Options*
 - Housing Choices*
 - Educational Opportunities*
- IV. Governmental Relations**
 - Local Self-determination*
 - Regional Cooperation*

Supporting Analysis of Data and Information

- I. Analysis**
 - Population*
 - Economic Development*
 - Housing*
 - Natural and Cultural Resources*
 - Community Facilities and Services*
 - Intergovernmental Coordination*
 - Transportation*
- II. Compliance with Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria**
- III. Analysis of Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy**

Data Appendixes

- I. Population**
- II. Economic Development**
- III. Housing**
- IV. Natural and Cultural Resources**
- V. Community Facilities and Services**
- VI. Intergovernmental Coordination**
- VII. Transportation**

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The 1989 Georgia Planning Act requires that each community and county in Georgia prepare and adopt a local Comprehensive Plan. The adoption of a Comprehensive Plan allows the County to maintain its Qualified Local Government Status which is required to qualify for certain State grants and loans. The requirements for a Comprehensive Plan are established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), effective May 1, 2005. The Plan is comprised of three main components: Community Assessment, Community Participation Plan, and the Community Agenda. This document is the *Community Assessment* portion of the Comprehensive Plan for Effingham County, Georgia.

The purpose of the *Community Assessment* is to analyze and assess local conditions as they exist now based on an analysis and inventory of existing conditions, land use patterns, and public policies. This document provides assessments for all of Effingham County, including the three incorporated cities of Guyton, Rincon, and Springfield, as well as the unincorporated portion of the county. The rules for local comprehensive planning established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs suggest that only summaries of data focused on “issues and opportunities” be presented to policy makers, and that the main presentation of data and inventory occur in an appendix of the community assessment. A “Supporting Analysis of Data and Information” also accompanies this document as a technical appendix.

The *Community Assessment* is primarily a staff driven process with community input on issues and opportunities. The Assessment will provide a solid foundation for the creation of the future vision for the County that will be created during the Public Participation and Community Agenda sections of the Comprehensive Plan that will follow. Our communities’ leaders recognize that this effort can play a critical role in maintaining and directing growth in a manner that is consistent with the community’s vision for the future.

Scope

The *Community Assessment* includes the following information, as required by the DCA Standards:

- Listing of issues and opportunities that the community wants to address
- Analysis of existing development patterns
- Analysis of consistency with the Quality Community Objectives
- Analysis of supporting data and information (Data Appendix)

IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction / County & Cities

The following sections contain typical issues and opportunities provided in the *State Planning Recommendations* that may be applicable to Effingham County and its three Cities – Guyton, Rincon and Springfield. This initial step is intended to yield a list of potential issues and opportunities for further study. This list will be modified based on stakeholder input received during preparation of the *Community Agenda*. The original list of issues and opportunities was obtained using stakeholder feedback given at several workshops held in the Summer of 2006, prior to the drafting of the *Community Assessment* document. This feedback is part of the public involvement process and is not meant to be taken as official policy, nor do these public comments necessarily reflect the viewpoints of the County, the three Cities, and their staff and elected officials.

The Issues and Opportunities are categorized according to eight community elements:

- I. Population Change**
- II. Economic Development**
- III. Natural and Cultural Resources**
- IV. Community Facilities and Services**
- V. Housing**
- VI. Land Use**
- VII. Transportation**
- VIII. Intergovernmental Cooperation**

The following Issues & Opportunities were identified by the community and committees during public workshops. These Issues & Opportunities do not necessary reflect majority opinion and will be further evaluated during the development of the Community Agenda.

I. Population Change

Issues

- Rapid population growth is expected in the next 20 years. The County needs to accommodate growth while maintaining its sense of place and community character.
- Future populations will consist of more retirees and elderly residents; will require more retirement housing, elder care and health care facilities.
- More families in the near future will require additional schools and other public infrastructure.

Opportunities

- There is available space to develop in the County; areas surrounding the Cities can be developed to add to existing communities.

II. Economic Development

Issues

- Need to recruit “environmentally friendly” industries.
- Need to improve sign control.
- Separate Industrial Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce Boards for more effective leadership and policy-making.
- Need to encourage more industrial growth.
- Growth should not receive “incentives” but should pay for the costs which occur due to expansion and new development.
- Need to improve adult literacy rates in the County.
- Need to reduce high school drop-out rates.
- More local jobs needed in County with training provided.
- Need English as second language classes for growing Hispanic community.
- Establish a 4-year college satellite campus in County (example: Armstrong Atlantic State, Georgia Southern, University of Georgia)
- Need more shopping and entertainment activities for youth (example: movie theaters).
- Need more general entertainment and recreation opportunities in County (people complain about lack of things to do).
- Need a liquor law passed so more and better restaurants will open in Effingham County.

- Need to recruit big box building and construction supply store to meet building demand.
- Need more hotels and restaurants.
- Need more retail/commercial development.
- Commercial establishments should be selectively recruited, i.e. such as restaurants and “group enhancers” such as movies and theaters.
- Need to mitigate appearance of “helter-skelter” strip mall development that is not aesthetically pleasing.
- Need to reflect history of Effingham – “Southern Charm”, etc. – in the architecture of the shopping strips and businesses; need more cohesiveness (example: City of Springfield looks like everything was just thrown together).
- New buildings and commercial centers need to be oriented for pedestrians, not cars. New developments need to remind us of historic Effingham, not a strip mall.
- Need to redevelop, redesign or remove major empty or failing retail spaces (example: Hwy 21/Ft Howard Rd.).
- Need to adopt rules so that growth is restricted to appropriate areas.
- Need more funding for existing health and human services/programs.
- Need more senior citizens programs and activities.
- Health and human services facilities need to be included in the comp plan.
- Need to cap property taxes for seniors
- Need to “grandfather” property taxes for families wanting to keep property in family for future generations.
- Need better jobs to keep Effingham students in the county after high school or college.
- Growth needs to be encouraged.
- Recognize the total impact of residential development.
- Impact fees are too high to compete with adjoining jurisdictions.

Opportunities

- Savannah Technical College and other vocational schools could locate in the County and provide local workforce training.
- Training for prison inmates to create opportunities for parolees and released prisoners.
- IDA and industrial park can bring new industries to the County.
- Literacy programs at libraries (and promotion to increase public awareness of existing or new programs) to enhance public education and continuing education.
- Opportunity to employ disabled residents via promotion/sales/delivery of G.E.M. enterprises (GA Islands Water) – subsidiary of Gateway Health Services.
- Proximity to I-16 and I-95 attracts new businesses and residents.
- Connectivity and proximity to Savannah ports encourages businesses and industries to locate in County as the ports grow.

- Create Tax Increment Financing Districts.
- Create economic incentives for growth (industrial, commercial, high-end residential).
- Initiate and promote a referendum to allow for liquor licenses (both package and pour).
- Drill major wells north of highway 119 and pump to the southern part of the county.
- Lower w/s fees to encourage more housing (this would create more monthly fees quicker).
- Analyze economic impact of growth and development on Effingham County economy.
- Encourage large churches to work with the county to build a student center (e.g. The Link Savannah Christian Church).
- Create better recreational facilities to encourage economic development.

III. Natural and Cultural Resources

Issues

- Need more cultural arts/entertainment programs and facilities.
- Need to preserve historic communities such as Guyton and Ebenezer; need to protect them from overdevelopment.
- Need tree ordinances to reduce clear cutting and the loss of trees.
- Need increased flood zone awareness.
- Need to protect wetlands and mitigate damage that has already been done.
- Existing neighborhoods need parks (recreation facilities, such as ball courts and fields); land owners could donate land for this use or apply a conservation easement.
- Need to remediate water pollution in rivers, streams, and ponds.
- Need to provide more pedestrian and bicycle friendly amenities such as sidewalks, neighborhood parks, greenspace, and trails.
- Need to cooperate with property owners who want to preserve greenspaces and provide the abovementioned resources for use by the public.
- Need to include depth and slopes of borrow pits in the County.
- Concerned with our development of agricultural areas to make quick profits without considering surrounding areas.
- Need better drainage facilities.
- Need a performing arts auditorium to serve entire County.
- Water withdrawal from the aquifer needs to be carefully regulated to prevent draw down.
- Need to implement wastewater treatment plan to re-use effluent disposal.
- There is no place for wildlife to go in south Effingham.
- Southern end of County used to look like Northern end but is fast losing its identity.
- Publicize the real reason Effingham built the Sewer Plant (existing septic tank pollution).
- Historic sites and structures should be protected.

- Stormwater runoff will become a more significant issue as permeable surfaces decrease through development.
- We need to develop a plan for water that reduces our need to buy water from neighboring jurisdictions (Chatham County).

Opportunities

- Need to identify places to remain AR-1 and protected land from becoming mismatched subdivisions.
- Need to address redevelopment of Atlas Sand Property.
- Need to preserve the northern end of County – beautiful agricultural land, part of Effingham’s community character and one of our greatest amenities.
- Controlled burns to maintain existing natural areas (longleaf pine for example).
- Preserve agricultural/forestry land within County.
- Need a moratorium on development on lots less than 5 acres.
- Need to capitalize on County’s geography and location.
- More historic monuments should be placed around the county.
- Cultural resources should be increased.

IV. Community Facilities and Services

Issues

- Libraries are too small and crowded – need new one to serve South Effingham and replace Rincon Library. County is eligible to receive impact fees but the need for new facilities must be included in County Comp Plan in order to collect these funds.
- Need to establish workable recycling program.
- Consider development of Atlas Property into a recreational area – include ATV’s, horse trails, bikes.
- Need a disc golf course.
- Need a community civic center needed to support cultural arts.
- Need some recreation space and playground equipment in the Clyo area.
- Need more asphalt walking trails convenient to housing developments.
- Need activities to involve senior citizens, especially recreation.
- Need playground for children in north Effingham County.
- Need recreation park near Shawnee area.
- Need to secure more recreation areas.
- Need to sponsor large recreation events.
- Need swimming pools at recreation centers.
- Need a better opportunity to learn in libraries.

- Need improved facilities.
- Need to improve residential waste collection – keeping on schedule, prompt replacement of damaged cans.
- Need drivers who can do the job without wrecking cans and tipping them over in roads and driveways.
- Current company contracted for trash pick-up very seldom shows up on the correct day.
- Need a spay/neuter program and increased awareness of pet health and overpopulation.
- Animal adoption program needs better facility and promotion.
- Adequate emergency shelters are needed and shelters for animals.
- Mosquito control program for West Nile and EEE – need mosquito monitoring.
- Need bird flu plan in case of epidemic outbreak.
- Need to address Nutrition and Physical Activity Coalition.
- Need to focus on obesity issues.
- Need to improve hospital facilities.
- Need wireless internet connections, especially in all governmental buildings..
- Need cable modem access throughout the County.
- EMS needs maps and directions on computers in emergency vehicle.
- Need better County facilities at the annex.
- Need better leadership at senior citizens center.
- Need a facility to shelter animals during emergency; pet shelters should be co-located with Red Cross shelters.
- The county needs better recreational facilities to attract tournaments (e.g. Millcreek in Statesboro).
- Need a curbside recycling program.
- Need a building to hold large countywide meetings or small conventions of 200-300 people.
- EMS and the Hospital are under strain from citizens reporting non-emergencies and using the emergency room for regular medical care.

Opportunities

- Need to develop/modernize boat ramp at Steel Bridge (only one on Ogeechee that the County owns)
- Need to develop boat ramps on Savannah River south of Springfield.
- Need to coordinate need for “cultural center” and library expansion into one complex.
- Coordinate programs between Rincon Recreation and Effingham Recreation.
- County could make money off of implementing recycling program and collecting paper and cans.

- Consider purchasing Ebenezer Landing for public use.
- Need to recycle/divert building materials from landfills.
- Bookmobile service as part of library system to provide service to areas that don't have library service in County.
- Opportunities to provide facilities for service of production/warehousing at GA Island Water (subsidizing of Gateway Behavioral Health Services), manufactured by disabled citizens.
- Public school system attracts residents across the region.
- Find uses for Atlas Sand tract.
- Raise millage rate to fund a recreation authority.
- Use old landfill adjacent to Floyd Avenue for recreation.
- Industry should work with local government to plan, fund and participate in the initial response to hazardous materials release.

V. Housing

Issues

- Need more affordable housing.
- Need to address different development/lot density for different parts of County.
- Need to address substandard building construction in subdivisions – i.e. foundations cracking.
- There are no buffers between subdivisions and roads
- Subdivisions are beginning to look like permanent mobile home parks.
- Need to create and enforce ordinances to clean up properties.
- Need more affordable assisted living facilities.
- Need mixed-income retirement community for able-bodied seniors.
- Need to educate property owners about septic systems and maintenance.
- Need to require mobile home communities to have off street parking, sidewalks, green space, recreation, paved roads, sewer and water systems.
- Need mixed use buildings in downtowns.
- Need to prohibit septic tanks.
- Need mixed lot sizes in subdivisions Countywide.
- Home locations are often too close to major roads and detract from natural beauty.
- Need to adhere to density scheme placing higher density residential near cities
- Need code enforcement on rental property and mobile homes.
- There is lack of safe, affordable housing.
- Need more ADA compliant rental property.
- Need more rental units.

- Mobile home parks need to provide community facilities that will serve as storm shelters

Opportunities

- County continues to reduce mobile home subdivisions.
- Need to waive impact fees for Habitat for Humanity.
- Habitat for Humanity provides services for needy residents.
- Need to promote historical housing stock.

VI. Land Use

Issues

- Need to stop growth in areas of County with no infrastructure such as water and sewer; encourage growth to take place in the cities - this would stop tax hikes.
- Need to listen to citizens who live adjacent to where new development proposes to build.
- Need to tighten zoning laws; reduce number of rezonings from AR to R1.
- Land use and zoning decisions should be balanced in the interests of everyone.
- Increased cost of land/housing is forcing many families into substandard and/or overcrowded living situations.
- Need to enhance quality of life through design of development – sidewalks, parks, dog walks, exercise stations, nature trails, etc.
- Need natural buffers between subdivisions and roads, not white plastic fencing.
- Need to address houses on .5 acre lots with septic systems on soil that is wet.
- Concern with increasing residential development in northern end of County on well and septic – resources not supporting that development.
- New housing development needs to be required to have park/recreation for residents/families.
- Need a better mix of ranges in land use to supply needed amenities to new developments.
- Need more green space for recreation use.
- Each community needs an identifiable downtown – need to designate historic districts.
- Need to have faith in local/state/federal agencies to govern land use/development.
- Need more tree and greenspace protection.
- There is lack of planned community development.
- Need more new communities with housing, schools, and shops in the same area.
- Land use needs to be consistent – stop spot zoning.
- Rethink housing density countywide.
- Investigate the impact of low density housing (large lots) in north end of the county on tax digest.

- Realtors and developers should have a larger voice in the county since they are a large part of the growth.
- Farming and timber land should have their own zoning designation to allow lower assessment and taxes.
- A comprehensive land use plan should allow higher densities where water and sewer exist.
- Development in areas without infrastructure should pay their own way.
- Commercial development should be clustered around intersections.
- A fair balance of large and small lots should be allowed in the third district

Opportunities

- Reduce densities with Master Land Use Plan
- Make it economically attractive to own agricultural and forest land.
- New neighborhoods being developed should include small parks (pocket parks), sidewalks, and trails to connect parks and neighborhoods.
- Rework Stormwater retention/detention requirements.
- Develop countywide drainage canals.
- Growth should be encouraged in all areas that have adequate infrastructure.
- Encourage creation of green space.

VII. Transportation

Issues

- Need safe intersections at new subdivisions.
- Need comprehensive road and traffic plan for next 20 years.
- Concern with too much development and no roads to support. Hwy 119, 21, 30 etc. are all two lane roads and cannot accommodate traffic – however, don't want to lose individual property to widen roads.
- We lack public transportation for people needing to access jobs, healthcare, etc.
- Need to work with other counties and Amtrak to provide rapid transit on existing railroads.
- Need to address traffic congestion on Blue Jay Road, Hwy 17, Hwy 80, Midland Road, and Hwy 30.
- Hwy 21 traffic through Rincon is bottle-necked at several points.
- Traffic signals needed at 9th Ave and Chimney Road.
- Need service roads along Hwy 21 to relieve congestion and reduce access points.
- Hwy 30 has too many new subdivisions using outdated traffic studies not taking into consideration the impact each new subdivision has before approval.
- Need to protect scenic roads in County such as Honey Ridge Road.

- Need to reduce speed limits where necessary.
- Entire Hwy 21 corridor from Rincon to I-95 is only getting worse – new developments in Rice Hope will create more traffic.
- Need to acquire right-of-ways for future road widening.
- Need to increase awareness of hurricane evacuation routes and maps.
- Need to pave shoulders on Hwy 30 for children walking to SEHS & SEMS and bicyclists.
- Hwy 17 and Hwy 80 intersection needs a stop light.
- Need more street cleaning services.
- Need to repair roads, especially in Clyo area.
- New by-pass needs to move forward and public needs to know its final route and implementation.
- Need to address ATV use on public roads.
- Need to make Hwy 21 a limited access expressway as soon as possible.
- Need to make Hwy 17 a limited access expressway in the next 10-15 years.
- Need to improve drainage – water and sewer lines along right away.
- Need cities to be pedestrian oriented; more pedestrian crosswalks needed.
- The road system needs to be improved to enhance commercial and residential growth.
- More east/west corridors are needed in the county.
- Need to explore additional transportation routes from Effingham to adjoining counties.

Opportunities

- We have several bicycle routes through County; need to promote more.
- Need annual rehabilitation of existing roads and drainage systems to improve safety.
- Need a plan and budget to maintain new community roads, drainage and common areas.
- Hwy 17 and Hwy 80 is attractive place for development.
- Federal 5311 and 5310 funding.
- Promote the Effingham Parkway.
- Open Hwy 17 all the way to I-16.
- Work with Gulfstream, International Paper and other large employers in Chatham County to offer monetary incentives for carpooling.

VIII. Intergovernmental Coordination

Issues

- Need to coordinate with neighboring communities on transportation issues.
- Need to promote collaboration between County and municipalities.
- Need to improve coordination between city and County regarding 911 addresses.

- Need qualified citizens to step up to the plate and serve their communities.
- Need single County wide metro government, and 10 year plan to get there.
- Need to coordinate road names and subdivision names between cities and County.
- Rice Hope Development on Hwy 21 South of Effingham County – will have large impact on our services and businesses, transportation issues, etc.
- Need to address duplication of efforts and anti-productive planning between three cities and unincorporated County.
- County needs to develop a positive image with the public.
- County/IDA/Chamber/Real Estate board/Home builders need to meet with the press to improve image.
- More people would volunteer to serve on boards if they weren't criticized by the public and the press.
- Need coordination of street names, subdivision names, and mapping efforts between the cities and the county.
- Be careful about creating laws that infringe on personal rights.
- All users of 911 service (police/fire/EMS) should financially contribute to the operational needs.
- GA Forestry and the Effingham County fire department should be better coordinated to deal with wild fires.

Opportunities

- Effingham Libraries are now part of Live Oak Public Libraries System with Chatham and Liberty counties – need to foster this relationship to facilitate growth and ability to meet resident's needs.
- County and cities need to work together on water and sewer issues.
- Concerned citizens provide feedback and oversight in County.
- Create a water/sewer authority.
- Create a parks and recreation authority.
- Create a regional transportation authority.
- Plan future growth of unincorporated areas in multiyear steps as a planning guide to the county for future investment.
- 911 should operate as a separate agency, under control of the Board of Commissioners, with the governing body made up representatives of the using agencies.
- Create a technical portal to coordinate information between Cities and County.

The following Issues & Opportunities were identified by the community and committees during public workshops. These Issues & Opportunities do not necessary reflect majority opinion and will be further evaluated during the development of the Community Agenda.

I. Population Change

Issues

- Rapid population growth is expected in the next 20 years. The City will be unable to accommodate new growth.

Opportunities

- The City needs to attract senior citizens and other residents who will contribute to the local economy and generate support for expanded recreational offerings, including a civic center.

II. Economic Development

Issues

- Guyton is a bedroom community. Residents work elsewhere and are therefore, not connected to local issues.
- There is only one grocery store in town. There needs to be more competition in the market & more shops.
- Residents must commute out of town for services and shopping.
- There are few job training opportunities in town or surrounding areas.
- The City does not possess a clear vision for the future economic development of the community.
- Guyton's economic development efforts do not focus on helping grow local small businesses.
- Business owners live elsewhere and are not connected to local issues

Opportunities

- There is land available in the City for commercial growth.
- Guyton is a bedroom community for Savannah and Statesboro.
- The City needs to promote and support locally-owned businesses.
- The restaurants in town serve the community. Downtown buildings are occupied with shops and other businesses.
- Guyton has a high quality of life.
- Good schools continue to attract new residents.

- The County’s industrial park draws new residents.
- Guyton has a cohesive, central downtown. Ongoing community development efforts continue to bring jobs to the City.

III. Natural & Cultural Resources

Issues

- The City does not have a protective tree ordinance. As a result, too many trees are being lost to new development.
- Local protection of historic and cultural resources is inadequate.
- There is a concern for the loss of community character & heritage in the City.
- Guyton lacks a central gathering spot for civic events
- There is insufficient greenspace or parkland in the City
- Citizens are unaware of natural and cultural resources in the community and the significance of such resources.

Opportunities

- Guyton has a high quality of life. The City is an historic railroad town.
- The heritage and character of the community is strong. Events such as Tour of Homes, Rummage Sales in railroad median, Bluegrass Festival, Christmas Parade, Tree lighting ceremonies, Dance classes, and concerts enhance the character of the City.
- The City is forming committee to explore creation of local historic district and commission.
- It should be possible to maintain small town feel given that the City is far from epicenter of growth.
- Guyton has a strong sense of community. The sense of community is exemplified in events such as the annual Thanksgiving dinner to honor public employees

IV. Facilities & Services

Issues

- There is insufficient water-sewer capacity in the City. New residential developments are using a mix of septic systems and sewer lines. Residents south of 119 are on septic.
- The City has insufficient administrative and management staff to serve the needs of a growing city. Guyton needs a city manager.
- Guyton’s 80-year old water line needs to be upgraded.
- The City’s recreation programs are operated by County.
- Recreational opportunities are limited for middle school age children. There is no community center in the City.
- Ash-covered streets are a maintenance issue.

- Schools in the Guyton are overcrowded.

Opportunities

- The City has a low crime rate. The Sheriff's Department as well as the Police Chief patrol the City.
- Water availability and capacity
- The Transportation Enhancement (TE) grant will fund a walking trail in the railroad median to connect downtown to school and nearby existing trail.
- The City has been successful in getting Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to extend water service. The City is seeking CDBG to extend wastewater treatment to those on septic systems.
- Guyton has a volunteer fire department.

V. Housing

Issues

- There is strong neighborhood concern regarding to higher density and providing affordable housing.
- Rising property values and associated costs for owners are an issue in the City.
- There is Special Needs Housing within the County; however, it is questionable if there is enough to meet the need. Available Special Needs Housing is limited to women and children.
- Housing options in the City are limited. There is no subsidized housing or multifamily housing. Trailer parks are being sold and redeveloped.
- There are no assisted living facilities for senior citizens in the City.
- The City of Guyton provides no support for the homeless.
- Some neighborhoods in the City are in need of revitalization or upgrade.

Opportunities

- Guyton is an attractive retirement destination for area workers.
- A variety of housing options exist such as Archer Place & Whitesville.
- Land is available for annexation.
- The City has a growing inventory of starter homes.
- Habitat for Humanity is active in the community.
- The City is in the early stages of growth which will allow the City to maintain balance of housing types.

VI. Land Use

Issues

- Neighborhoods are typically concerned with potential problems in higher density developments.
- There are not enough places for arts activities and performances.
- There are too many manufactured home or mobile home parks in the City.
- The community lacks a “center” that combines commercial, civic, cultural and recreational activities.

Opportunities

- The City has an opportunity to convert the old school gym into a civic center.
- Land is available for annexation into the City.
- There is an interest in revisiting Zoning reclassification in order to promote mixed use.
- Mobile home parks are being sold and redeveloped.
- The abandoned railroad line on GA 21 is to be landscaped in order to provide places for arts activities, performances, and a general site for gathering and social interaction.
- The City has the opportunity to expand on the existing downtown area to create a “center” that combines commercial, civic, cultural and recreational activities.

VII. Transportation

Issues

- There is no public transportation, taxis, or buses operating in Guyton.
- Local trails are not linked with those of neighboring communities, the region and the state.
- Currently, there is no operating commuter rail line that runs through the City.
- The community lacks a connected local trail network.
- Streets in new developments are not connected to, nor compatible with, those in neighboring areas.

Opportunities

- Highway 119 is a designated Georgia Bike Route.
- A rural transit program is planned.

VIII. Intergovernmental Cooperation

Issues

- Guyton does not coordinate planning efforts with adjacent communities for areas near mutual boundaries.
- There is little regional coordination and cooperation.

Opportunities

- Guyton should work with Springfield on shared issues. The two cities should consider sharing a city manager.
- Guyton has a good relationship with other jurisdictions in the County. The City should improve communications via town hall style meetings.

The following Issues & Opportunities were identified by the community and committees during public workshops. These Issues & Opportunities do not necessary reflect majority opinion and will be further evaluated during the development of the Community Agenda.

I. Population Change

Issues

- Rapid population growth is expected in the next 20 years. The City of Rincon is unable to accommodate new growth.

Opportunities

- The City needs to attract senior citizens and other residents who will contribute to the local economy and generate support for expanded recreational offerings, including a civic center.

II. Economic Development

Issues

- There is a need for more commercial development in the City.
- Rincon is a bedroom community. Residents work elsewhere and are therefore, not connected to local issues.
- There are few job opportunities in town. Employment opportunities in the City are primarily in the service industry.
- Economic development efforts do not focus on helping grow local small businesses.
- There is no public transportation in Rincon.
- Rincon experiences competition from nearby cities and has difficulty attracting chain restaurants.

Opportunities

- Rincon is located in proximity to rail facilities, I-95, and the Savannah-Hilton Head International airport.
- The County's industrial park draws new residents. The City of Rincon is positioned to benefit from a mega site located nearby in the City of Pooler.
- The City is welcoming to new commercial growth.
- There is available land for expansion and the community is annexation friendly.
- Rincon provides a family oriented environment and an excellent quality of life.
- Good schools continue to attract new residents. The City is a bedroom community for Savannah.

- New development increases the City’s revenues and contributes to the quality of life.
- In addition to being the entranceway to the County, Rincon is also the County’s commercial center.

III. Natural & Cultural Resources

Issues

- The City of Rincon should implement environmental regulations for the protections of Wetlands, Groundwater Recharge Areas, and Water Supply Watersheds consistent with DNR’s Rules for Environmental Planning (Part V).
- There is a lack of a central gathering spot for civic events in the City.
- There is insufficient greenspace or parkland in the City.
- Citizens are unaware of the natural and cultural resources with in the community and the significance of these features.
- Local protection of historic and cultural resources is inadequate.
- Tree and Landscape requirements pose difficulties for developers.

Opportunities

- A high quality of life exists in Rincon.
- Rincon is an historic railroad town.

IV. Facilities & Services

Issues

- The City’s Recreation Department is under funded and has offers limited recreational opportunities.
- Public Safety and Public Works need to be relocated in order to better respond to Rincon’s growing needs.
- Rincon’s infrastructure planning is inadequate. There is a need to improve the water-sewer infrastructure in the City.

Opportunities

- The City has a low crime rate.
- There are good schools in the City.
- Facilities and programs provided by the Recreation Department are heavily used and user friendly.
- Water-sewer infrastructure is relatively new.
- The underutilized tennis courts on 17th Street could be redeveloped.

V. Housing

Issues

- Much of new construction is limited to a single housing type, specifically starter homes.
- Neighborhoods do not have a healthy mix of uses within easy walking distance of residences.
- Schools are not located within neighborhoods.
- Code enforcement is not adequate to prevent substandard housing due to the limited staff.

Opportunities

- Land is available for annexation.
- There are an abundance of starter homes in Rincon.
- There is subsidized housing on Lisa Street.
- Rincon provides an alternative to living in Hinesville or Savannah.

VI. Land Use

Issues

- Rincon is facing an extremely fast rate of growth. New development within the City is spread out and only accessible by car.
- The City's development patterns do not create safe and pedestrian-friendly environments.
- The City does not have a central focus that combines commercial, civic, cultural and recreational uses.

Opportunities

- Land is available for annexation.
- The City has plans to develop a new town center
- There is an opportunity to develop a multi-use trail on the railroad tracks.

VII. Transportation

Issues

- Major corridors within the City suffer from congestion, clutter, signage and sprawl.
- There is no public transportation in Rincon.
- Increasing commute times and distances indicate that more people are driving longer distances in traffic to reach home, school, shopping, or work.
- There are few alternatives to using a car to get to places and to eliminate traffic congestion.
- The City is not pedestrian or bike friendly. There are insufficient sidewalks, bike trails and safety features.

- Streetscape improvements are not geared towards traffic calming and pedestrian/bicycle friendliness.
- Rincon needs a street lighting ordinance to guide developers and apportion costs.

Opportunities

- Rincon Bypass will help ease congestion.
- The City should encourage development of bike paths to connect commercial and residential areas.
- Rincon has a Street Tree program.

VIII. Intergovernmental Cooperation

Issues

- There is little regional coordination and cooperation.
- The City does not coordinate planning efforts with adjacent communities for areas near mutual boundaries.

Opportunities

- The City of Rincon has a good relationship with other jurisdictions in the County.

The following Issues & Opportunities were identified by the community and committees during public workshops. These Issues & Opportunities do not necessary reflect majority opinion and will be further evaluated during the development of the Community Agenda.

I. Population Change

Issues

- Population growth is expected in the next 20 years.
- There are external limits on the City's water-sewer capacity.

Opportunities

- The City should work to attract residents who will contribute to the local economy and generate support for expanded recreational offerings, including a civic center.

II. Economic Development

Issues

- There is only one grocery store in town. There needs to be more competition in the market and more shops.
- The City lacks a choice in restaurants.
- Springfield is a bedroom community. Many residents work elsewhere and are not connected to local issues.
- Residents must commute out of town for services and shopping.
- There are few job opportunities in town. Most of the jobs available are low wage jobs.
- Economic development efforts in the City do not focus on helping to grow local small businesses.
- The City does not have a clear vision for the future economic development of the community.
- There is no public transportation, taxis, or buses in Springfield.

Opportunities

- The City of Springfield offers a high quality of life.
- There is a cohesive, central downtown. Most of the buildings and shops downtown are occupied.
- Good schools continue to attract new residents to Springfield.
- Springfield is a bedroom community for Savannah and Statesboro.
- The County's industrial park draws new residents.

III. Natural & Cultural Resources

Issues

- There is a concern for the loss of community character & heritage in the City.
- Local protection of historic and cultural resources is inadequate.
- There is insufficient greenspace or parkland in Springfield.
- The City needs tree protection ordinance.
- Many residents are unaware of presence and significance of natural and cultural resources such as wetlands and historic buildings.

Opportunities

- The City of Springfield has implemented environmental regulations for the protection of Wetlands and Groundwater Recharge Areas consistent with DNR's Rules for Environmental Planning (Part V).
- The City of Springfield provides a high quality of life.
- Because Springfield is a historic town, it could be a draw for heritage tourism.
- Springfield has a small town feel.

IV. Facilities & Services

Issues

- There a lack of activities for youth (16-20 years old). There are no movies, dances, skating or bowling.
- The City lacks the necessary capacity for wastewater discharge.
- Springfield has insufficient administrative and management staff to serve the needs of a growing city.
- New residents expect a level of service that is beyond Springfield's capacity.
- Springfield's Public Safety staff is faced with a transient population from Augusta and Savannah.

Opportunities

- Springfield has a low crime rate.
- The City has a volunteer fire department.

V. Housing

Issues

- Some neighborhoods in the City are in need of revitalization or upgrade.
- There is an insufficient amount of affordable housing and subsidized housing in the City.
- There is only one assisted living facility for seniors adjacent to the City.
- Support for the homeless is limited to church efforts.

- Property values and other associated costs for owners are rising.

Opportunities

- Springfield is an attractive retirement destination for area workers.

VI. Land Use

Issues

- There is an insufficient amount of land set aside for active recreation in the City.

Opportunities

- Land is available for annexation into the City.
- The City has the opportunity to expand on its existing downtown to create a “center” that combines commercial, civic, cultural and recreational activities.

VII. Transportation

Issues

- Truck traffic through Springfield’s downtown is a result of the poor connection between Highway 119 and the Bypass north of the City.
- The streets in new developments are not connected to, or compatible with, those in neighboring areas.
- There is no public transportation, taxis, or buses in the City. Springfield recently lost Greyhound bus service.
- Currently there is not an operating commuter rail line running through the City.
- Local multi-use trails are not linked with those of neighboring communities, the region, or state.

Opportunities

- The County developed the Ebenezer Bike Trail, which runs from downtown Springfield to Ebenezer Creek.
- Highway 119 is a Georgia Bike Route and has potential to draw tourists to the area.

VIII. Intergovernmental Cooperation

Issues

- The City does not coordinate planning efforts with adjacent communities for land areas near mutual boundaries.

Opportunities

- Springfield is working with Guyton and the County on increasing wastewater infrastructure capacity.

ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Effingham County

I. Existing Land Use

Analysis of existing land use enhances the County's and the Cities ability to accommodate growth, and to plan for the future provision of public services and facilities. Challenges to the County's and Cities' physical environment are often related to land development. Therefore, analysis of existing land use patterns will provide insight for the planning of long-range growth and development. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) sets the standards and procedures for developing local comprehensive plans; adherence to the DCA schedule and regulations is necessary for Qualified Local Government (QLG) status, which bestows eligibility for state grants, loans and permits. The Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, or "Local Planning Requirements", (effective May 1, 2005) emphasize that land use planning which coordinates and supports efficient growth and development patterns will promote sustainable economic development, protection of natural and cultural resources and provision of adequate and affordable housing.

Methodology

The Effingham County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) staff prepared the existing land use map using data produced in year 2003. Updated parcel coverage was added.

Using the 2004 aerial photos and other methods, the land use information for the County and Cities' were classified according to eight standard land uses, defined as follows:

Agriculture

This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), agriculture, or commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting.

Commercial

This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.

Conservation /Recreation

This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These areas may be

either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.

Industrial

This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses.

Public/Institutional

This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include city halls and government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc. This category does not include facilities that are publicly owned, but are classified more accurately in another land use category. For example, publicly owned parks and/or recreational facilities are included in the Park/Recreation/Conservation category and include landfills in the Industrial category; and general office buildings containing government offices are included in the Commercial category.

Residential

The predominant use of land within the residential category is for single family and multi-family dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities.

Transportation/Utilities

This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.

Undeveloped

This category is for lots or tracts of land that are served by typical urban public services (water, sewer, etc.) but have not been developed for a specific use or were developed for a specific use that has since been abandoned.

The following sections will discuss how growth and land use changes affect natural and cultural resources as well as the potential for infill development and re-development opportunities throughout the County. Also included in this section are the areas where development should be directed and where it should be avoided.

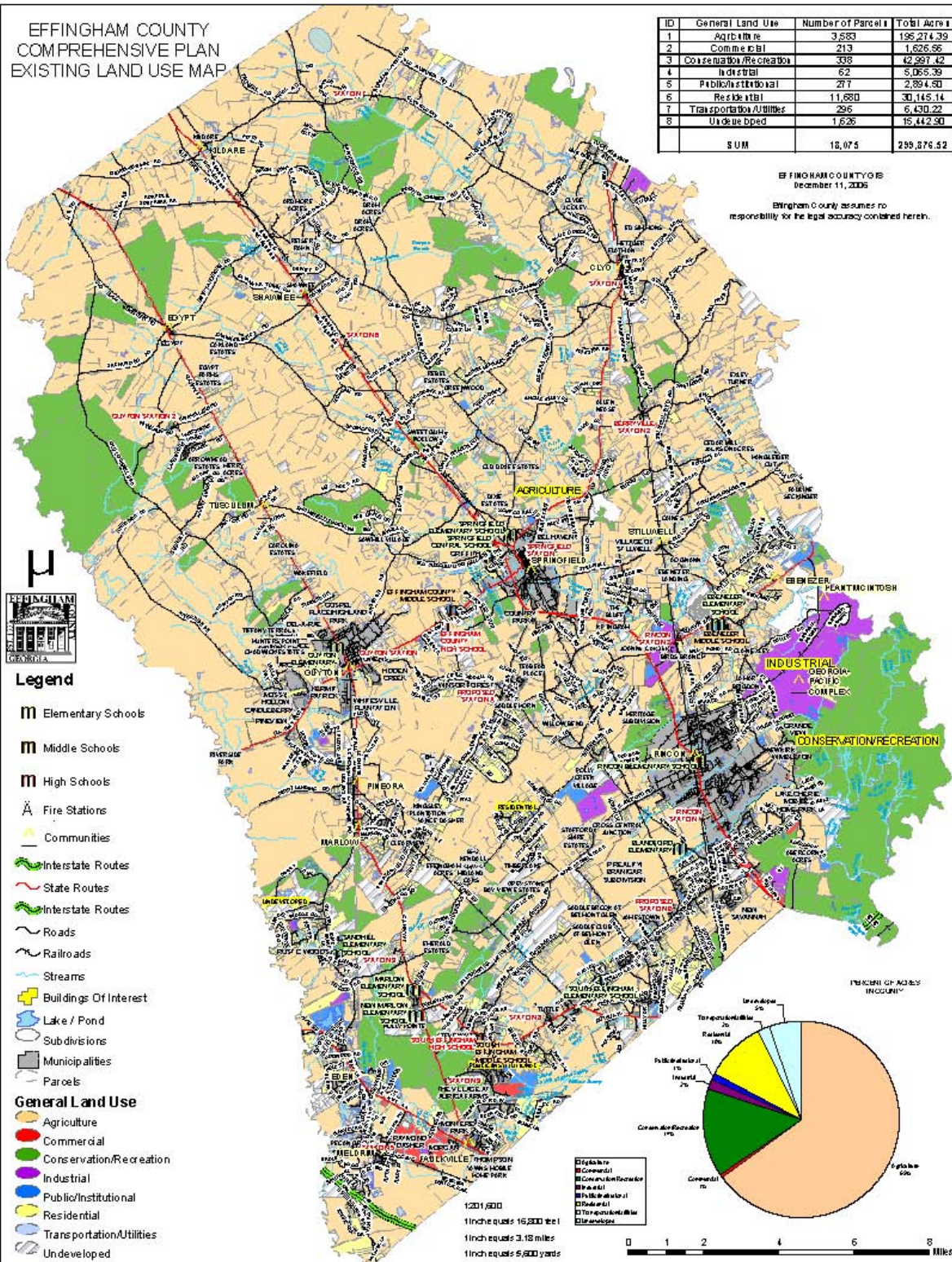
The existing land use maps are current as of June 30, 2006.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
EXISTING LAND USE MAP

ID	General Land Use	Number of Parcels	Total Acres
1	Agriculture	3,583	195,214.39
2	Commercial	213	1,626.86
3	Conservation/Recreation	338	42,997.42
4	Industrial	62	5,065.39
5	Public/Institutional	277	2,894.50
6	Residential	11,680	30,145.14
7	Transportation/Utilities	296	6,430.22
8	Undeveloped	1,626	15,442.90
	SUM	18,075	258,376.52

EFFINGHAM COUNTY GIS
December 11, 2006

Effingham County assumes no responsibility for the legal accuracy contained herein.

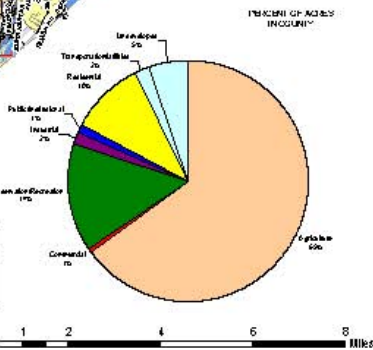


Legend

- Elementary Schools
- Middle Schools
- High Schools
- Fire Stations
- Communities
- Interstate Routes
- State Routes
- Interstate Routes
- Roads
- Railroads
- Streams
- Buildings Of Interest
- Lake / Pond
- Subdivisions
- Municipalities
- Parcels

General Land Use

- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Conservation/Recreation
- Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Transportation/Utilities
- Undeveloped



1:201,600
1 inch equals 16,300 feet
1 inch equals 3.15 miles
1 inch equals 5,000 yards



Table 1 shows the amount of land, number of parcels and percent allocation of each land use in the County.

Table 1: Existing Land Uses in Unincorporated Effingham County			
<i>Land Use Categories</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Total Acres</i>	<i>Percent of County's Total Acreage</i>
Agriculture	3,645	193,463.07	65%
Commercial	202	1,714.74	1%
Conservation/Recreation	341	45,581.21	15%
Industrial	60	5,019.12	2%
Public/Institutional	273	2,944.29	1%
Residential	11,584	29,543.42	10%
Transportation/Utilities	156	2,771.41	1%
Undeveloped	1,552	15,307.63	5%
Total	17,813	296,344.89	100%

Effingham County is primarily rural, with the dominant land use being agricultural (65% of total land), and conservation/recreation areas being the second largest land use (at 15%). Agricultural land uses, such as farming and livestock, have provided the traditional way of life in the County, although rapid growth in residential development in recent years has contributed to a shift in the character of the community. The County will need to consider how to balance the need for new housing with conservation of working farms and agricultural lands.

Industrial and commercial land uses account for 3% of the total area. Proximity to the Ports of Savannah and Interstates 95 and 16 will prompt further industrial growth; as new industries locate in the County and new services and other businesses open to cater to the growing population, these industrial/commercial land uses will greatly expand.

Five percent of the land is classified as undeveloped, and much of this property is adjacent to existing residential developments suggesting that currently undeveloped land will become later phases of a subdivision. Other undeveloped land is adjacent to existing commercial or industrial land uses and provide opportunities for infill in the future.

II. Areas Requiring Special Attention

These areas are defined by the DCA as:

- Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development;
- Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur;
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation;

- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors);
- Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated;
- Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites);
- Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.

Natural resources

Savannah River: The Savannah River forms the boundary between South Carolina and Georgia, and runs along the north border of Chatham and Effingham counties for approximately 77 miles. The riverfront area west of Hwy 17 is a vast series of wetlands broken occasionally by landings or bluffs. The adjacent uplands are composed of nine individual areas, totaling about 90 acres. Most of these uplands are accessible by road, and many have residential and related development. Historic sites along the Savannah River include Ebenezer Landing.

Mary Khars Warnell Education Center: Located south of Guyton on Hwy 17, the center provides programs on forest ecosystems and sustainable forest management. It is located within the 3,300 acre Dorothy Warnell Research, Education and Demonstration Forest.

Ogeechee River: The Ogeechee River forms the south border of Effingham County.

Savannah National Wildlife Refuge: Effingham County contains a portion of this national refuge. This area is about 20,000 acres and is located along the Savannah River near the border of Chatham County. The land is owned by the U.S. Department of Interior and most of the property is inaccessible.

Big Ebenezer Creek: The Ebenezer Creek corridor is a unique ecosystem known as a “blackwater stream” containing a blackwater swamp with an old growth bald-cypress/water-tupelo community on the lower portion towards the Savannah River. The drainage area for the Ebenezer Creek covers much of the County and extends into Screven County on the north end. The swamp environment of Ebenezer Creek features water levels that are influenced greatly by the rise and fall of the Savannah River, and has been designated both as a Georgia Scenic River and a National Natural Landmark.

Honey Ridge Road: This two-mile road located west of Guyton has a scenic tree canopy that drapes over the road. This site has been featured in movies and area tourist publications.

Creeks and Landings: Steel Bridge, Abercorn Landing, Tuckaseeking Landing, Ebenezer Landing, Cedar Bluff, Sisters Ferry Landing, Frying Pan Landing, Berry Landing, Seines Landing, Old Log Landings, Symons Landing, Old Wood Landing, Taylor Landing, Dasher Landing, Newington Landing, Hyatts Landing, Long Bridge Landing, Tommy Long Boat Landing, Gaffneys Landing, Little Ebenezer Creek, Runs Branch Creek, and Jacks Branch Creek are at risk of being negatively impacted as the county develops.

Hunting Clubs: The land owned by the following clubs are at risk of being developed as nearby land uses become residential and as these properties become attractive for development: Allen Plantation HC, Andmar Farms Fox Pen, Ashley Hatcher HC, B&B HC, Berryville HC, Blue Sky HC, Boggy Bay HC, Bragg HC, Broken Horn HC, Busy Bees HC, Clys HC, Cowpen Branch HC, Derek C. Hobbs, Effingham HC, Egypt HC, Fuzzy Boundaries HC, H&D HC, Indigo Bay HC, Irwin Mercer HC, Jack's Branch HC, James B. Helmly HC, James Kessler and Helen Rhinehart HC, Lockner Creek HC, McClaws HC, Mill Creek Hunting Preserve, Morgan HC, Nichols HC, Old Dixie HC, Pine Grove HC, Pineland HC, R.M.C. HC, Regal HC, Runs Creek HC, Savannah River Fox Den, Skinner Bay, Springfield Buck HC, Sure Shot HC, T&K Dog HC, Thomas Exley HC, Tree Huggers HC, Turkey Brach Fox Den, W. David Gnann, Jr, HC, Weaver's Run Fox Pen, Wright HC.

Reiser-Zoller Farm: Recipient of a Centennial Heritage Farm Award, which honors farms owned by members of the same family for 100 years or more and are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Edward Gnann Farm, Heidt Farm, and Morgan Farm: Recipients of a Centennial Family Farm Award, which recognizes farms owned by members of the same family for 100 years or more that are not listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Cultural resources

New Ebenezer area (Town of Ebenezer): Settled in 1739, the New Ebenezer area is located at the end of Georgia S.R. 275. Even though many of the original buildings no longer exist, the Jerusalem Lutheran Evangelical Church, which was built in 1767-69, remains on the property. The area presently consists of the New Ebenezer Retreat Center, the historic cemetery (believed to be the oldest cemetery in Georgia that is still in use), the Treutlen House Orphanage, a museum, and several refurbished homes.

Tuckaseeking Landing: This was the name of a large Uchee Indian village that was existence when the Salzburgers arrived in Ebenezer in 1734. In 1777, Tuckasee King was selected as the first county seat of Effingham County.

Areas where rapid development is likely to occur

Hwy 17 and Hwy 80 intersection: The Georgia Department of Transportation is in the process of re-aligning this intersection, as this is a major connector between south Effingham and the Pooler/West Chatham area.

Area along proposed Effingham Parkway: The parkway will connect Hwy 119 to the Pooler/West Chatham area, which will alleviate traffic along Hwy 21. The bypass will become a major thoroughfare in the County upon completion. The proposed start date is 2010.

Area north of Hwy 119: The area north of Hwy 119 is largely a single-family housing area, with five-plus acre lots and agricultural property. As the population in the southern end of the County becomes denser, development pressure in this area will increase.

Blandford/Bluejay Road: A new elementary school was opened in this area in August 2007, which will likely spur residential development.

Midland Road: Connects the Guyton area to the Savannah/Chatham County area. Subdivisions are scattered along this road, and it is projected that development will continue. The increase in population will have an impact on the road.

Infill development opportunities

Intersections and adjacent land at and along Blue Jay Road, Midland Road, State Hwy 30, Courthouse Road, Mansion on Hwy 17, State Hwy 21 (between Rincon and Springfield), Hwy 17 in Marlow area.

Brownfield Redevelopment areas

The following brownfield sites have been identified by the County as places for potential redevelopment:

- Oxidation pond near Ash Street Extension.
- Two parcels of property on Low Ground Road (pin #393-24).
- Property located behind Effingham Hospital (MSW landfill).
- Landfills at 251 Watts Roads and Courthouse Road.
- Land Application Spray Fields.
- Fort James (Georgia Pacific) and Plant McIntosh parcels:
 - 2-71B Effingham County
 - 32-88A Effingham County
 - 2-89 Effingham County

36-22	Ralph Yarbrough
4-10C	Effingham County
75-72	Will Mary Long
8-20	Ronald Futch
78-8	Ralph W. Futch, Sr.

Redevelopment areas

Hwy 21: The major commercial thoroughfare in Effingham County is Hwy 21, which runs from Screven County in the north through the cities of Springfield and Rincon into Chatham County in the south. Between Springfield and the Chatham County line there are a number of older commercial buildings and strip centers that provide opportunities for redevelopment as the County grows. The section of Hwy 21 that runs through Rincon could be a good place for mixed use development as it is the most urban area in the County.

Walmart/Kroger plaza in Rincon: This retail center was the first large retail development in Effingham County. This property is located at the intersection of Hwy 21 and Fort Howard Road. The center was anchored by a big box development and a grocery store. All of the smaller units are presently leased with a variety of businesses, from a drugstore to a martial arts studio. It is envisioned that the center will be redeveloped because of its prime location in the center of Rincon.

Clyo railroad area: This area is comprised of older homes that are located along the railroad tracks, which is reminiscent of a railroad town. Many of the properties in this area have fallen into disrepair, and the homes need to be renovated.

Large abandoned structures or sites

Gold Kist building in Clyo: This facility has been closed for many years. At this time, it is being utilized for storage by the owner. With its location near the river, redevelopment at this property needs to be carefully considered so that it is compatible with its environmentally surroundings.

Atlas Sand and Gravel: The County currently owns this old sand and gravel site. The site consists of ± 347 acres, with approximately 36.85 acres preserved under a state conservation program. The industrial equipment is still on the site. The County has discussed developing this property into a multi-use recreational site, selling it for private development, or trying to work with the state to develop a state park on the site.

Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of public facilities and services

Hwy 80 near Meldrim: This is currently a two-lane highway that is utilized by area residents, commuters, commercial activity, and heavy-commercial transporters.

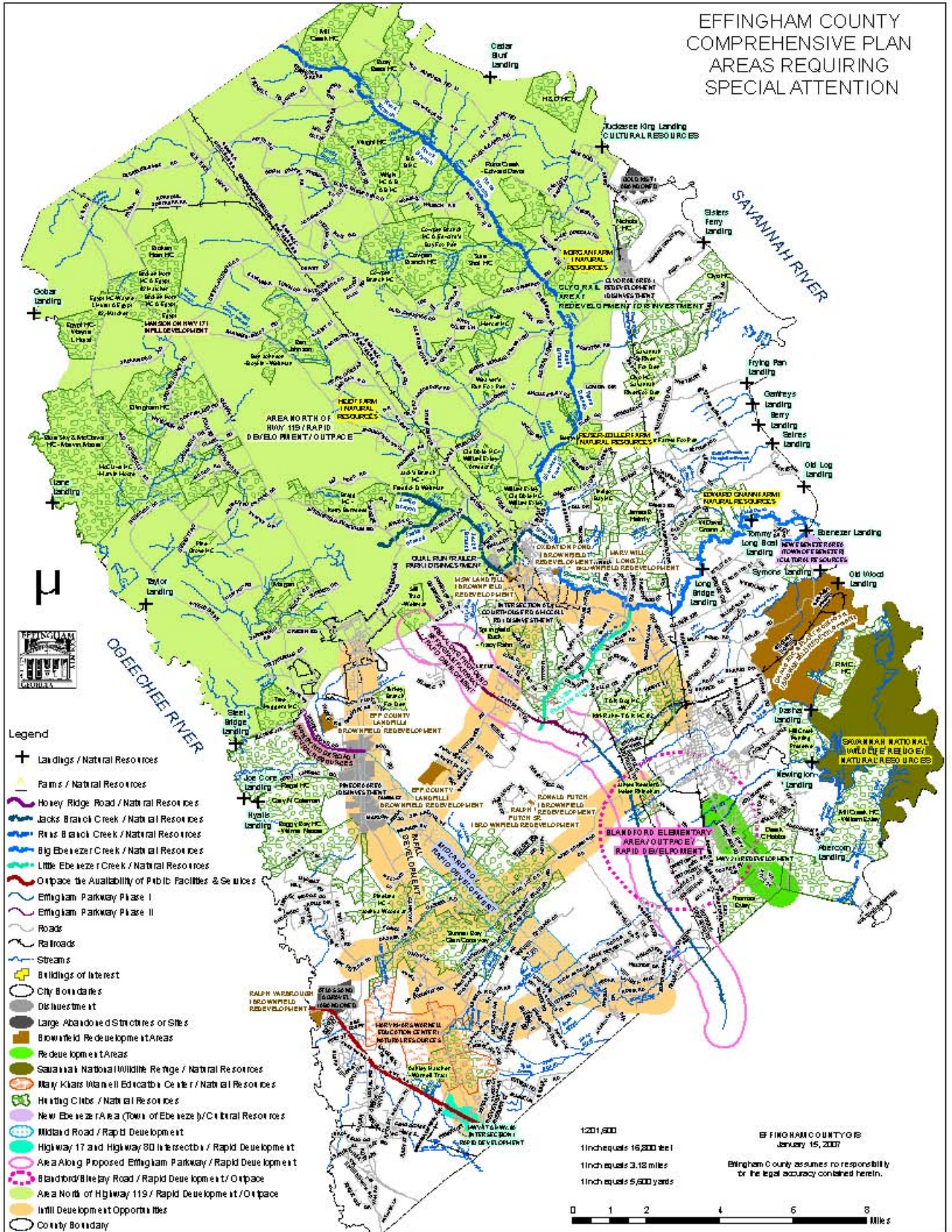
Blandford Elementary area: As this area develops, water and sewer will have to be extended to provide for residential development.

Area north of Hwy 119: This area of the County is served by well systems, but as major development occurs in this area, water and sewer services will need to be extended.

Areas of significant disinvestment and/or under-utilized areas

Clyo area; Quail Run Trailer park in Springfield; Pineora area; intersection at Courthouse Road and McCall Road.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION



III. Recommended Character Areas

The DCA defines Character Areas as: “A specific geographic area within the community that:

- Has unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced (such as a downtown, a historic district, a neighborhood, or a transportation corridor);
- Has potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance of future development through adequate planning and implementation (such as a strip commercial corridor that could be revitalized into more attractive village development pattern); or
- Requires special attention due to unique development issues (rapid change of development patterns, economic decline, etc.)

Each Character Area is a planning sub-area within the community where more detailed, small-area planning and implementation of certain policies, investments, incentives, or regulations may be applied in order to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence its future development patterns in a manner consistent with the community vision.”

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

<i>Character Area</i>	<i>Description/Predominant Characteristics</i>	<i>Suggested Development Strategy</i>	<i>Location</i>
<p>Suburban Transitional (Water Sewer Service Delivery Area)</p>	<p>Formerly rural residential or farming land, now typical single-family detached subdivisions with little to no commercial development. This area is located south of GA Hwy 119.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development should be a master-planned with mixed-uses, blending residential development with schools, parks, recreation, retail businesses and services, linked in a compact pattern that encourages walking and minimizes the need for auto trips within the subdivision. • There should be strong connectivity and continuity between each master planned development. • There should be good vehicular and pedestrian/bike connections to retail/commercial services as well as internal street connectivity, connectivity to adjacent properties/subdivisions, and multiple site access points. • Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional character, and do not include “franchise” or “corporate” architecture. • Wherever possible, connect to regional network of greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians for both tourism and recreational purposes. • Promote street design that fosters traffic calming such as narrower residential streets, on-street parking, and addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. 	<p>South of Highway 119.</p>

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
<p>Historic Communities/Markers/Restoration</p>	<p>Sites and communities of historic significance often designated by a marker. The majority of these historic sites either date to Salzburger development in the mid-eighteenth century or the post-Sherman era in the latter part of the nineteenth century.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect historic areas from demolition/degradation. • New development nearby should be sensitive to the historic area by using proper buffering and complimentary architecture. • Historic markers should be maintained. • Create County parks around these areas. • Historic properties should be maintained or rehabilitated/restored according to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation. • Pedestrian access and open space should be provided to enhance citizen enjoyment of the area. • Linkages to regional greenspace/trail system should be encouraged as well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ebenezer ▪ Tuckasee-King
<p>Communities (See additional information below)</p>	<p>There are 14 small communities scattered throughout the County. The vast majority former railroad stops along The Central of Georgia. Recently the communities in South Effingham have witnessed increased population growth as subdivisions gravitate towards large tracts of undeveloped land.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage new development to connect with and expand the existing street grid in these communities. • Focus on reinforcing stability by encouraging maintenance or upgrade of existing properties. • Vacant properties in the neighborhood offer an opportunity for infill development of new, architecturally compatible housing. • Include well-designed new neighborhood activity center at appropriate location, which would provide a focal point for the neighborhood, while also providing a suitable location for a grocery store, hardware store, and similar appropriately-scaled retail establishments serving neighborhood residents. • Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections should also be provided to encourage these residents to walk/bike to work, shopping, or other destinations in the area. 	<p>Throughout the County.</p>

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
Conservation	Low-lying areas on the border of the County that is deemed necessary for preservation because the land lies in a flood zone. Conservation areas also makeup land that is deemed environmentally significant and necessary to preserve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create extensive buffer zones to keep development out of the flood plain. • Use this land to create County parks/open space. • Link these areas with linear parks or pathway systems. Maintain natural, rural character by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not allowing any new development. • Promoting use of conservation easements. • Widen roadways in these areas only when absolutely necessary. • Carefully design the roadway alterations to minimize visual impact. • Promote these areas as passive-use tourism and recreation destinations. 	Along both the Savannah and Ogeechee Rivers.
Industry	The prime location for industry recruitment and relocation is at the cross roads of GA Hwy 21 and GA Hwy 275. This area is also shared with the Vocation Education Environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create training programs at the vocational school to mirror the needs of the nearby industries. • Develop a planned industrial park having adequate water, sewer, storm-water, and transportation infrastructure for all component uses at build-out. • Incorporate landscaping and site design to soften or shield views of buildings and parking lots, loading docks, etc. • Incorporate signage and lighting guidelines to enhance quality of development. 	GA Highways 21 and 275.
Vocation Educational Environment	Anchored by future satellite branch of Savannah Technical College and joined by location of the Industrial Park used by the IDA to recruit new industries to the area. This area is located at the cross roads of Hwy 21 and GA Hwy 275.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above. 	GA Highways 21 and 275.

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

<i>Character Area</i>	<i>Description/Predominant Characteristics</i>	<i>Suggested Development Strategy</i>	<i>Location</i>
City Character Areas (See additional information below)	Cities of Guyton, Rincon and Springfield.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See individual city sections below. 	
Primary Regional Connector	Arterial roads which provide high capacity access to adjoining counties and states. From a regional transportation standpoint, generally considered the main access route in or out of the County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a natural vegetation buffer (at least 50 feet in width) along the corridor. • All new development should be set-back behind this buffer, with access roads, shared driveways or inter-parcel road connections providing alternate access to these developments and reducing curb cuts and traffic on the main highway. • Encourage landscaped, raised medians to provide vehicular safety, aesthetics, and also pedestrian crossing refuge. • Provide pedestrian facilities behind drainage ditches or curb. • Provide paved shoulders that can be used by bicycles or as emergency breakdown lanes. • Coordinate land uses and bike/pedestrian facilities with transit stops, if applicable. • Manage access to keep traffic flowing. 	GA Highways 221, 119, and US Highway 80.
Secondary Regional Connector	Arterial roads which provide access to adjoining counties and communities. From a regional transportation standpoint, generally considered a secondary access route in or out of the County.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above. 	GA Highways 30 and 17.

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
<p>Commercial Development Corridor / Area</p>	<p>Developed or undeveloped land paralleling the route of a street or highway in town that is already or likely to experience uncontrolled strip development if growth is not properly managed.</p> <p>Characterized by high degree of access by vehicular traffic; on-site parking; low degree of open space.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontage or other connector roads are necessary to reduce vehicular access points onto this highway. • The County could buy land along this corridor to preserve green space, reduce traffic and increase recreational possibilities. • Focus on appearance with appropriate signage, landscaping and other beautification measures. • Manage access to keep traffic flowing; using directory signage to clustered developments. • Retrofit or mask existing strip development or other unsightly features as necessary. 	<p>Located along GA Hwy 21, this main transportation corridor runs from the northern end of the County, through Springfield and Rincon and connects Effingham to Chatham County.</p>
<p>Rural Residential</p>	<p>Homes located on large parcels of land, sparsely located, and can include a small to medium amount of farming. This section of the County has little to no large scale developments. This area is located north of GA Hwy 119.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain rural atmosphere while accommodating new residential development by: • Permitting rural cluster or conservation subdivision design that incorporate significant amounts of open space. • Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional rural character, and should not include “franchise” or “corporate” architecture. • Wherever possible, connect to regional network of greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians for both tourism and recreational purposes. • Can be designed for greater pedestrian orientation and access, more character with attractive clustering of buildings within the center, leaving open space surrounding the center.. 	<p>North of Highway 119.</p>

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

<i>Character Area</i>	<i>Description/Predominant Characteristics</i>	<i>Suggested Development Strategy</i>	<i>Location</i>
Crossroads Area	Located around the I-16 Corridor, this area encompasses the communities of Meldrim, Faulkville and Eden. The Industrial Development Authority is seeking to create a large industrial site near the I-16 interchange.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a planned industrial park having adequate water, sewer, storm-water, and transportation infrastructure for all component uses at build-out. Incorporate landscaping and site design to soften or shield views of buildings and parking lots, loading docks, etc. • Use buffers to separate from adjacent uses. • Encourage greater mix of uses (such as retail and services to serve office employees) to reduce automobile reliance/use on site. • Residential areas should be properly buffered so that they will be minimally impacted by the future commercial and industrial development. 	Around I-16 and Old River Road and along Highway 80.
Savannah River	Includes areas of unique physical and ecological characteristics along the Savannah River, including significant bluffs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant natural and environmental resources exist along the river corridor and need to be protected from development. • Promote use of conservation easements. • Promote recreational opportunities on the river, including canoeing and fishing, that are unique in the County. • Carefully design roadway alterations to minimize visual impact. Widen roadways only when absolutely necessary. 	

Individual Community Profiles

Cities

Guyton: In 1797, after the Revolutionary War, Squire Zachariah White was granted land as a reward for his service. Dying without an heir, Mr. White's land was acquired by the Effingham County Commissioners, subdivided and then sold to many Savannah residents for summer homes. Originally called Whitesville, the town eventually changed its name to Guyton after Archibald Guyton after realizing the existence of another Whitesville near Columbus, GA. During the Civil War a Confederate Hospital housing 200 patients was built but the hospital and most of the town was destroyed during Sherman's March to Sea. In 1886 the town was incorporated. The need for passenger trains to and from Savannah slowly ended and by 1967 the train was discontinued and the tracks were removed. Guyton is well known for its historic houses and quaint community and hosts an annual Tour of Homes.

Rincon: Gathering its name from George Wadley, the Chief construction engineer of the Southbound Railroad Company, Rincon reminded him of a "little spot" he had visited in Mexico as the name translates from Spanish. Rincon first sprang to life due to the railroad offering farmers opportunities to ship their crops to Savannah and the surrounding. Now Rincon is Effingham's largest town with many residents commuting to Savannah daily for work.

Springfield: Created by the Georgia Legislature on February 7, 1799, Springfield was established to be a centrally located county seat in the heart of Effingham County. The benefits of being the county seat offered new comers educational opportunities and thus attracted many new residents. As Sherman's Army made its way through Springfield in 1864 much of the town was pillaged and burned. Springfield is home to many historic houses as much of the post-Sherman housing is still standing.

Communities

Clyo: The Clyo area was first inhabited by the Yuchi Indians. This is why Oglethorpe helped settle the Salzburgers at Ebenezer, to serve as a buffer between the Native Americans and Savannah residents. Not far from Clyo is an area called Sisters' Ferry, the community in which Georgia's first governor, John Adam Treutlen, was from. This was a crossing point into South Carolina that served as the main connection between the two states for many of the Colonial and Revolutionary years. The railroad would eventually be extended to Clyo connecting it with Springfield, Rincon and eventually Savannah.

Ebenezer: Ebenezer, meaning stone of help, was settled in 1734 by German Salzburgers and was the second settlement in Georgia. As the original settlement was found to be unhealthy, the Salzburgers eventually moved their settlement to a place called Red Bluff. Ebenezer was home to the first orphanage in Georgia and Jerusalem Evangelical Lutheran Church in Ebenezer is the

oldest continuing Lutheran congregation in the United States. Although the Salzburgers gradually left Ebenezer for Springfield, Rincon and other towns, Ebenezer is now seeing a resurgence in population growth as subdivisions locate to large tracts of rural land.

Eden: Named in colonial times as the area near the Ogeechee River, Eden was located along a stagecoach route from Savannah to Darien in the early 1800's. The community later served as a railroad stop on the Central of Georgia Railroad.

Egypt: As the Central of Georgia Railroad was built through Effingham in 1838, the community of Egypt sprang to life as it relied on the eight trains that passed through its community every day. As the area has an agriculture history, it is interesting to note that in 1935, Mrs. Lillian Walker Foy invented a "Thermo Container" This invention was used by farmers to ship produce north while remaining ripe and fresh.

Faulkville: Located around the intersection of Hwy 17 and Hwy 80; Faulkville sits along the Effingham/Chatham County line. Named after William Faulk, Mr. Faulk owned a general store at the intersection and worked as a carpenter; Mr. Faulk built and sold several homes near the store. Mr. Faulk was tragically killed in a home invasion in 1966.

Kildare: The area started off as a predominately farming community where corn, sweet potatoes, rice and cotton were grown. As Effingham is plentiful in trees, the community would eventually turn to the turpentine and timber business. After the Brinson Railway was brought through Kildare the community experienced growth as new lots were laid out and sold.

Marlow: A convenient stop along a stagecoach line from Savannah, Marlow garnered its name from Robert Marlow who owned The Marlow Inn. When the Central of Georgia Railroad eventually ran through the town, the President, Richard Cuyler named the area after the Marlow family.

Meldrim: Named after Superior Court Judge Peter W. Meldrim, Meldrim like many communities in Effingham was originally a train stop. The land was surveyed and in 1890 the land was subdivided and sold off. At its peak, Meldrim was a thriving town with its shopping and business district located next to the railroad. Meldrim was also the site of the worst tragedy in Effingham County. On June 28, 1959, the nation was horrified as a train derailed near a popular swimming area killing 23 people and burning many others. A local community park commemorates those who died in the train accident.

Pineora: Founded by William LeSerruries Gignilliat, Mr. Gignilliat came to Pineora very sick but quickly improved in health after moving to the area. In 1891 the Pineora Investment

Company bought 388.3 acres adjacent to the Central of Georgia Railroad. Communities like Pineora offered residents the opportunity to work in Savannah and then enjoy the “healthy” benefits of the suburbs.

Sand Hill: True to its name, the area is very sandy. The community lies between Marlow and Eden along Sand Hill Road. The Sand Hill community was a stop along the Central of Georgia Railroad but was referred to as Doswell.

Shawnee: Briefly settled by Shawnee Indians in 1674, several families began settle in the area before the Revolutionary War. Later in 1909 the Brinson Railroad was built through Shawnee connecting Springfield to the Screven County.

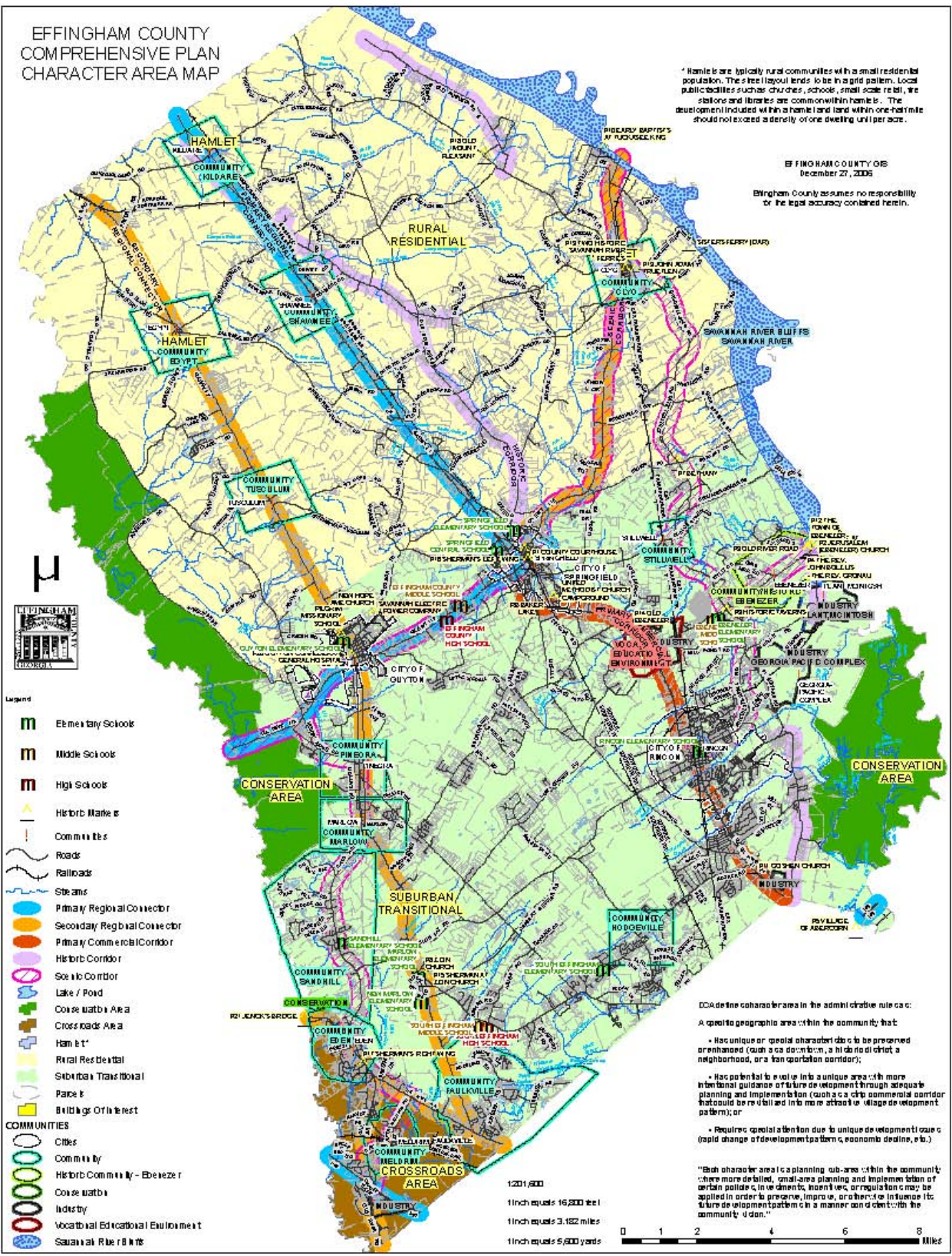
Tusculum: Located between Guyton and Egypt, Tusculum was developed along the Central of Georgia Railroad. The community provides a rural, scenic setting and is solely residential.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
CHARACTER AREA MAP

* Hamlets are typically rural communities with a small residential population. The street layout tends to be in a grid pattern. Local public facilities such as churches, schools, small scale retail, fire stations and libraries are common within hamlets. The development included within a hamlet and land within one-half mile should not exceed a density of one dwelling unit per acre.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY GIS
December 27, 2006

Effingham County assumes no responsibility for the legal accuracy contained herein.



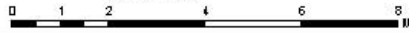
- Legend**
- Elementary Schools
 - Middle Schools
 - High Schools
 - Historic Marker
 - Communities
 - Roads
 - Railroads
 - Streams
 - Primary Regional Collector
 - Secondary Regional Collector
 - Primary Commercial Corridor
 - Historic Corridor
 - Scenic Corridor
 - Lake / Pond
 - Conservation Area
 - Crossroads Area
 - Hamlet
 - Rural Residential
 - Suburban Transitional
 - Park
 - Bridge/Off-Road
- COMMUNITIES**
- City
 - Community
 - Historic Community - Ebenezer
 - Conservation
 - Industry
 - Vocational Educational Environment
 - Savannah River Bluffs

Define character areas in the administrative local government geographic area within the community that:

- Has unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced (such as a downtown, a historic district, a neighborhood, or a transportation corridor);
- Has potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance of future development through adequate planning and implementation (such as a city commercial corridor that could be reutilized into more attractive village development pattern); or
- Requires special attention due to unique development issues (rapid change of development pattern, economic decline, etc.)

"Each character area is a planning sub-area within the community where more detailed, small-area planning and implementation of certain policies, laws, ordinances, etc. or regulations may be applied in order to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence its future development pattern in a manner consistent with the community's vision."

1:201,600
1 inch equals 16,800 feet
1 inch equals 3,168 meters
1 inch equals 5,600 yards



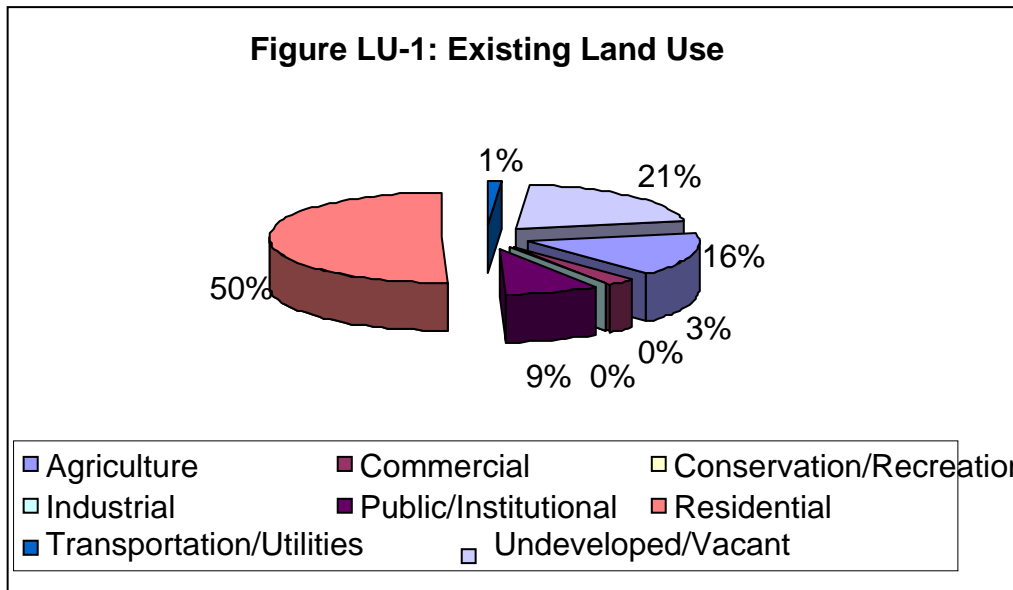
I. Existing Land Use

Table 1 shows the amount of land, number of parcels and percent allocation of each land use in the City of Guyton.

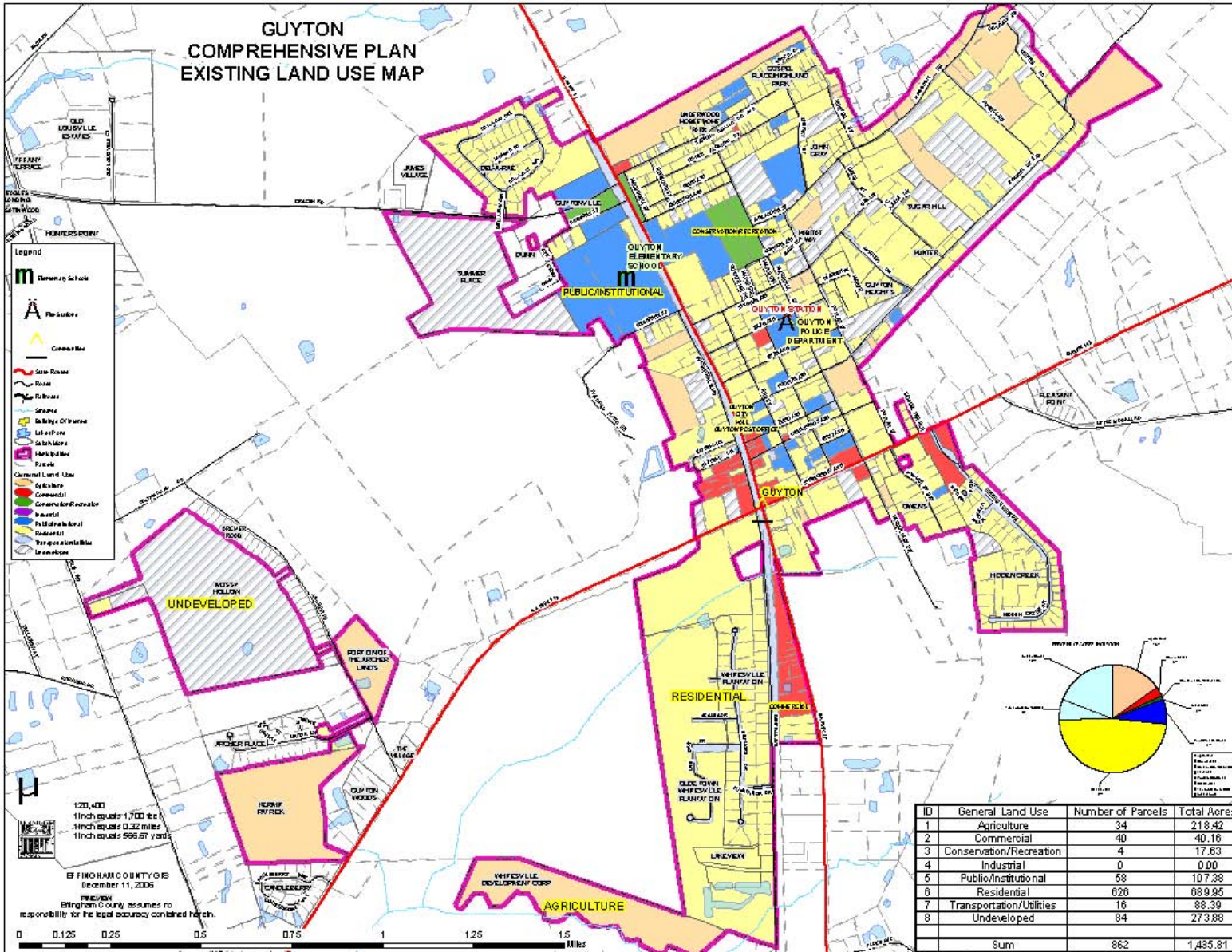
Table 1: Existing Land Uses in Guyton			
<i>Land Use Categories</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Total Acres</i>	<i>Percent of City's Total Acreage</i>
Agriculture	30	211.92	16%
Commercial	36	36.49	3%
Conservation/Recreation	0	0.00	0%
Industrial	0	0.00	0%
Public/Institutional	61	122.41	9%
Residential	625	689.59	51%
Transportation/Utilities	9	19.63	1%
Undeveloped	99	284.70	21%
Total	860	1,364.74	100%

Source: Existing Land Use Map, City of Guyton

Figure 1: Existing Land Use in Guyton



Source: Existing Land Use Map, City of Guyton



Guyton's rural character is illustrated by the proportion of its land that remains classified as agricultural use. Sixteen percent of the City's total acreage is classified as agriculture. Guyton's land use is most strongly influenced by residential development. Fifty percent of the City's developed land is devoted to residential uses. A mere three percent is classified as commercial. The majority of commercial uses are situated along Highways 119 and GA Highway 17. The City may wish to re-evaluate the proportion of land allocated to residential versus commercial uses, as the cost of service delivery to residential areas is significantly higher.

No land is classified for either Industrial or Recreational/Conservation uses. City Parks are designated Public/Institutional, which comprises nine percent of the City's total acreage. Twenty-one percent of the City's land is classified as undeveloped. Based on the map, it appears that much of this land is adjacent to existing residential development and, therefore, is likely to be used in future phases, or developed as infill. The City has been accommodating to annexation requests, even distant, noncontiguous parcels. An annexation study or strategy should be considered, in order to more effectively guide residential growth into areas where infrastructure exists.

II. Areas Requiring Special Attention

These areas are defined by the DCA as:

- Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development;
- Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur;
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation;
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors);
- Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated;
- Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites);
- Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.

Natural or cultural resources

The City has abundant wetlands. No local regulations are in place to protect these resources.

Areas where rapid development is likely to occur

Highway 17 and 119, and along Old Louisville Road are areas where rapid development is likely to occur.

Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of public facilities and services

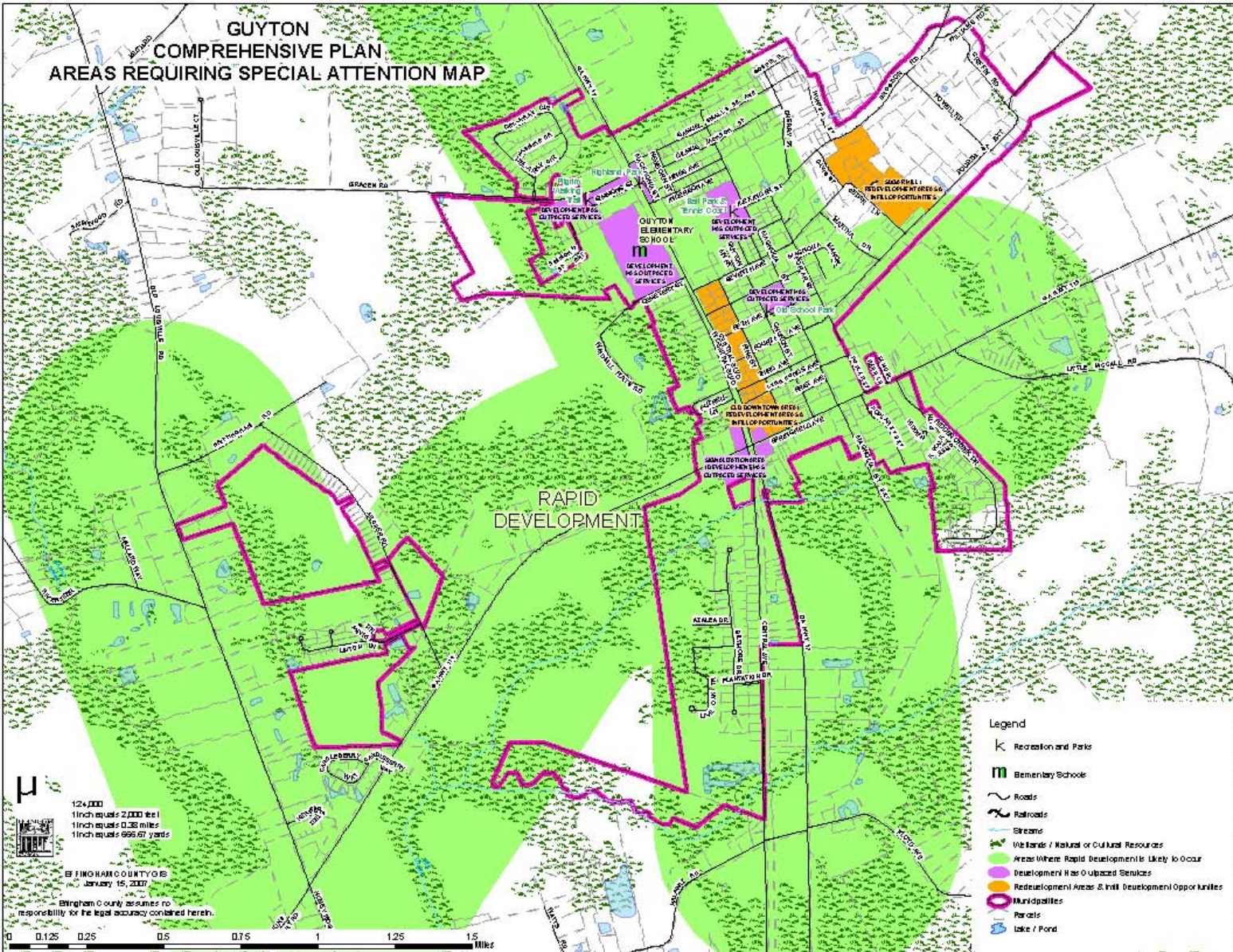
Schools and recreation facilities are struggling to keep up with the fast pace of residential growth. In addition, city services such as water and wastewater treatment are challenged to maintain a growth rate comparable to development of the residential sector. Transportation issues such as signalization (Highway 119 at Highway 17) have begun to appear on the local agenda.

Redevelopment areas, Infill development opportunities, Areas of significant disinvestment, and/or under-utilized areas

There are relatively few undeveloped parcels in the City's downtown area. However, there is great potential for redevelopment and infill for poorly-maintained or damaged properties throughout the old downtown area. The Sugar Hill area is in need of redevelopment / blight-abatement.

Large abandoned structures or sites

There are no known large abandoned structures or sites in Guyton.



III. Recommended Character Areas

The DCA defines Character Areas as: “A specific geographic area within the community that:

- Has unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced (such as a downtown, a historic district, a neighborhood, or a transportation corridor);
- Has potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance of future development through adequate planning and implementation (such as a strip commercial corridor that could be revitalized into more attractive village development pattern); or
- Requires special attention due to unique development issues (rapid change of development patterns, economic decline, etc.)

Each Character Area is a planning sub-area within the community where more detailed, small-area planning and implementation of certain policies, investments, incentives, or regulations may be applied in order to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence its future development patterns in a manner consistent with the community vision.”

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

<i>Character Area</i>	<i>Description/Predominant Characteristics</i>	<i>Suggested Development Strategy</i>	<i>Location</i>
Suburban Transitional (Water Sewer Service Delivery Area)	Area where pressures for the typical types of suburban residential subdivision development are greatest (due to availability of water and sewer service). Without intervention, this area is likely to evolve with low pedestrian orientation, little or no transit, high open space, high to moderate degree of building separation, predominantly residential with scattered civic buildings and varied street patterns, often curvilinear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development should be a master-planned with mixed-uses. • Connectivity between each master planned development. • Good vehicular and pedestrian/bike connections to retail/commercial services as well as internal street connectivity, connectivity to adjacent properties/subdivisions, and multiple site access points. • Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional character, and do not include “franchise” or “corporate” architecture. • Connect to regional network of greenspace and trails, for both tourism and recreational purposes. • Promote street design that fosters traffic calming such as narrower residential streets, on-street parking, and addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. 	All land adjoining current city limits.

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

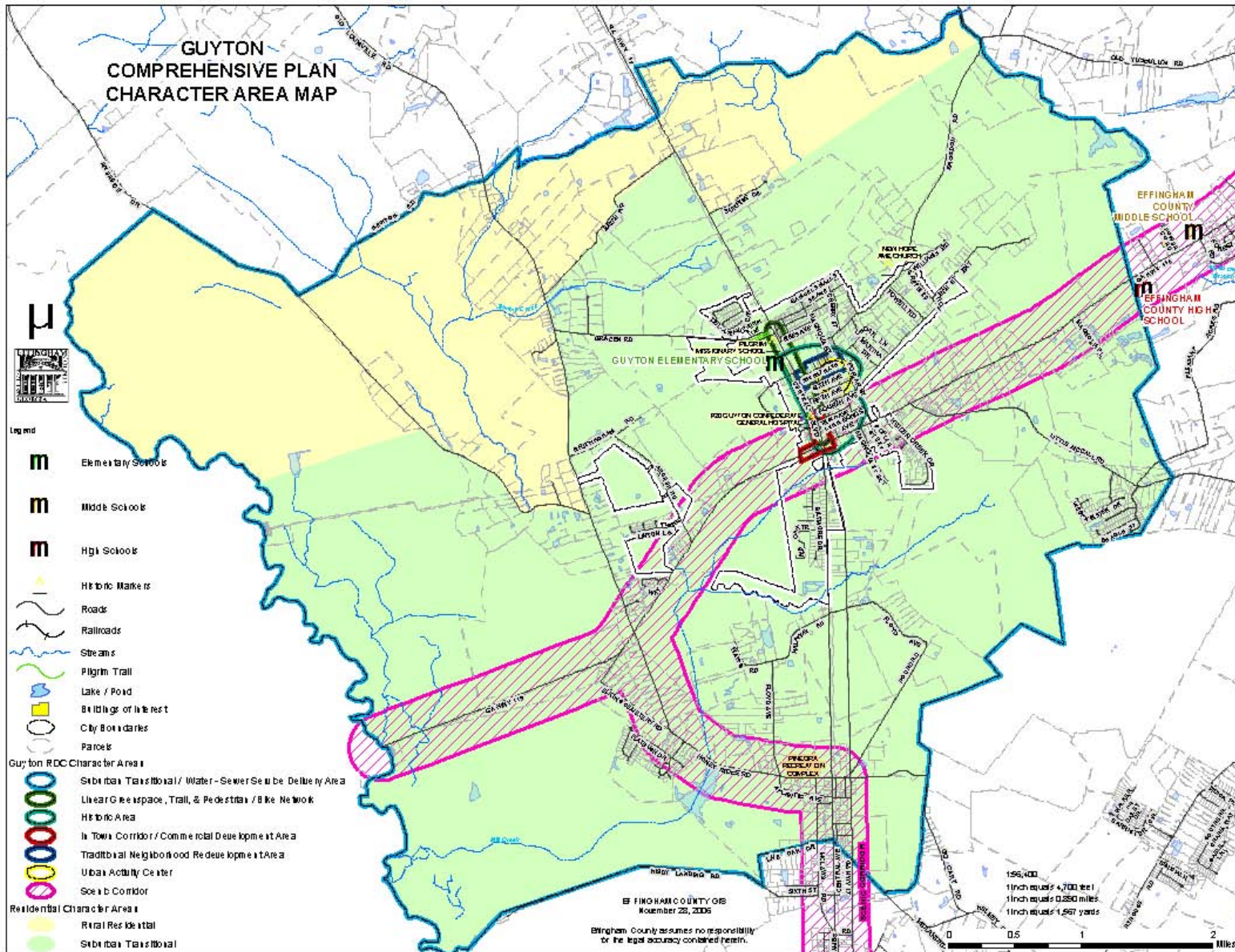
Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
<p>Linear Greenspace, Trail & Pedestrian / Bike Network</p>	<p>Open space that follows natural and manmade linear features. Greenways can provide pedestrian linkages, and can serve as an alternative transportation network, accommodating commuting to work or shopping as well as recreational biking, skateboarding, walking and jogging.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create these linkages by: • Linking greenspaces into a pleasant network of greenways • Set aside land for pedestrian and bicycle connections between schools, churches, recreation areas, city centers, residential neighborhoods and commercial areas. 	<p>Old railroad line along Highway 17 as it runs through town and Proposed Scenic Byway</p>
<p>Historic Area</p>	<p>Historic district or area containing features, landmarks, civic or cultural uses of historic interest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect historic properties from demolition and encourage rehabilitation with appropriate incentives, including National Register of Historic places designation, which enables eligibility for tax incentive programs. • Historic properties should be maintained or rehabilitated/restored according to the Secretary of the Interior's <i>Standards for Rehabilitation</i>. • New development in the area should be of scale and architectural design to fit well into the historic fabric of that area. • Pedestrian access and open space should be provided to enhance citizen enjoyment of the area. 	<p>Downtown historic district encompasses the original (188) city limits.</p>

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
<p>In-town Corridor / Commercial Development Area</p>	<p>Developed or undeveloped land paralleling the route of a street or highway in town that is already or likely to experience uncontrolled strip development if growth is not properly managed.</p> <p>Characterized by high degree of access by vehicular traffic; on-site parking; low degree of open space.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage development that is aesthetically appealing and, therefore, more marketable to prospective tenants by: • Building new commercial structures at the street front, taking up a portion of the oversize parking lot and creating a shopping “square” around a smaller internal parking lot. • Gradually convert corridor to attractive boulevard with signage guiding visitors to downtown and scenic areas around the community. • Upgrading the appearance of existing older commercial buildings with façade improvement, new architectural elements, or awnings. • The appearance of the corridor can immediately be improved through streetscaping enhancements (street lights, landscaping, etc.). • Reconfiguring the parking lot and circulation routes for automobiles. • Encourage pedestrian and bicycling amenities, including benches, lighting and bike racks. • Encourage landscaping and other appearance enhancements, trees in parking lots to provide shade and help reduce storm water runoff. • In the longer term, enact design guidelines for new development, including minimal building setback requirements from the street, to ensure that the corridors become more attractive as properties develop or redevelop. 	<p>Highways 119 and 17</p>

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
<p>Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area</p>	<p>A neighborhood that has declined sufficiently that housing conditions are bad, there may be large areas of vacant land or deteriorating, unoccupied structures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The redevelopment strategy for the area should focus on preserving and rehabilitating what remains of the original housing stock, while rebuilding, on the remaining land, a new, attractive neighborhood following the principles of traditional neighborhood development. • The neighborhood should include a well-designed new neighborhood activity center at appropriate location, which would provide a focal point for the neighborhood, while also providing a suitable location for a grocery store, hardware store, and similar appropriately-scaled retail establishments serving neighborhood residents. • Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections should also be provided to encourage residents to walk/bike to work, shopping, or other destinations in the area. • New streets should be connected (i.e. minimize or prohibit cul-de-sacs) to disperse traffic, shorten walking/biking trips. • Design features that encourage safe, accessible streets should be employed – such as, narrower streets, on-street parking, sidewalks, street trees, and landscaped raised medians for minor collectors and wider streets. 	<p>Central Avenue to Poplar Street, between Sixth Street and Gordon Avenue.</p>
<p>Urban Activity Center</p>	<p>The existing conglomeration of Police and Recreational Facilities at Magnolia Street provides an opportunity for the city to highlight services and develop a center for diverse uses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections should also be provided to encourage these residents to walk/bike to work, shopping, or other destinations in the area. • The appearance of the civic hub can immediately be improved through streetscaping enhancements (street lights, landscaping, etc.). 	<p>Magnolia and Fifth Streets.</p>

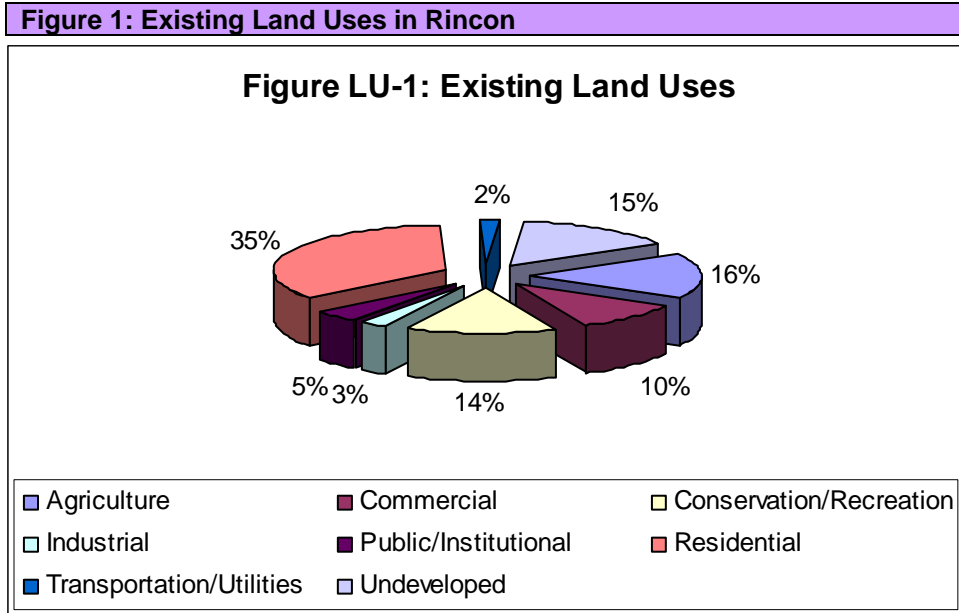


I. Existing Land Use

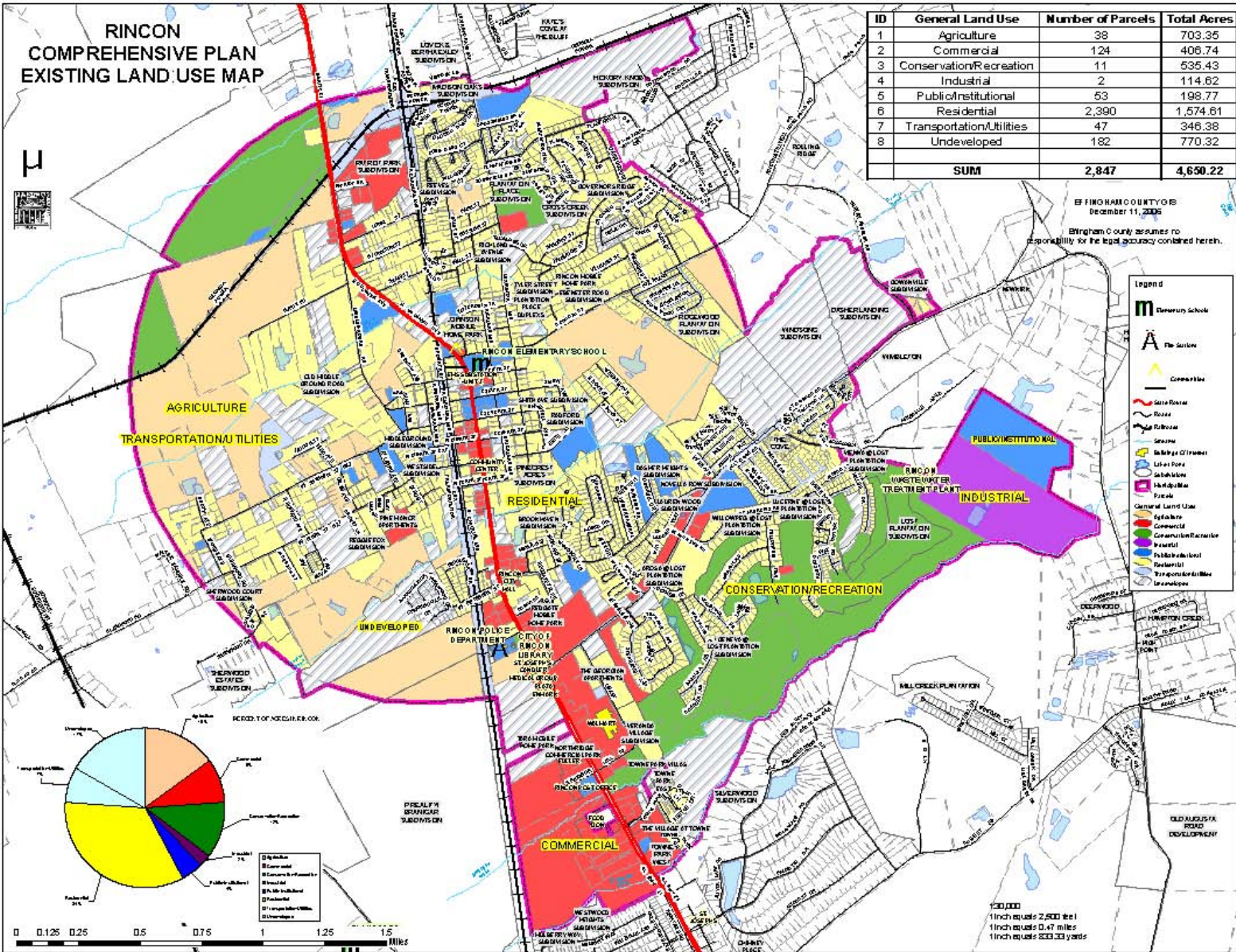
Table 1 shows the amount of land, number of parcels and percent allocation of each land use in the City of Rincon.

Table 1: Existing Land Uses in Rincon			
<i>Land Use Categories</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Total Acres</i>	<i>Percent of City's Total Acreage</i>
Agriculture	31	759.59	16%
Commercial	142	470.71	10%
Conservation/Recreation	9	646.59	14%
Industrial	4	115.32	3%
Public/Institutional	53	210.36	5%
Residential	2,398	1,614.26	35%
Transportation/Utilities	27	88.06	2%
Undeveloped	158	705.00	15%
Total	2,822	4,609.89	100%

Source: Existing Land Use Map, City of Rincon



Source: Existing Land Use Map, City of Rincon



At thirty five percent of the total land area, residential uses predominate in Rincon. However, a surprising 16 percent remains classified as agricultural use, while commercial uses occupy only 10 percent of the City's land. City leaders should watch the proportion of land classified as residential, as compared to commercial, as the cost of service delivery to residential areas is significantly higher.

Fifteen percent of the City's land is classified as undeveloped. Based on the map, it appears that some of this land is platted and awaiting development. In addition, some undeveloped land is adjacent to existing development—both residential and commercial—and therefore likely to be used in future phases, or developed as infill. The City is proactive in annexation, and is likely to maintain a balance of “undeveloped” land as it continues to grow.

The majority of commercial uses are situated along Highway 21. Industrial uses include the City's waste water treatment facility on Fort Howard Road, and account for only three percent of the City's total acreage.

Conservation/Recreation uses account for 14 percent of the City's total acreage, and include golf courses in residential developments. These areas are not open to the public, and therefore do not count toward the City's recreational facilities. Due to the strong demand for recreational facilities in the City, officials may wish to procure more land for trails, parks and natural areas.

II. Areas Requiring Special Attention

These areas are defined by the DCA as:

- Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development;
- Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur;
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation;
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors);
- Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated;
- Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites);
- Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.

Natural or cultural resources

The City has abundant wetlands, and is home to both water supply watershed and groundwater recharge areas. No local regulations are in place to protect these resources.

Areas where rapid development is likely to occur

Ft. Howard Road and Highway 21 are areas where rapid development is likely to occur in Rincon.

Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of public facilities and services

Schools and recreation facilities are struggling to keep up with the fast pace of residential growth. In addition, City services such as water and wastewater treatment are challenged to maintain a growth rate comparable to development of the residential sector. Transportation issues such as signalization (Highway 21 at Ninth Street) and widening and turn lanes (Highway 21 at Fourth Street) have consumed City officials in recent times.

Redevelopment areas

The old Kroger shopping Center on Highway 21, and the Old Lovett Hardware Store have recently been sold. Redevelopment is expected.

Large abandoned structures or sites

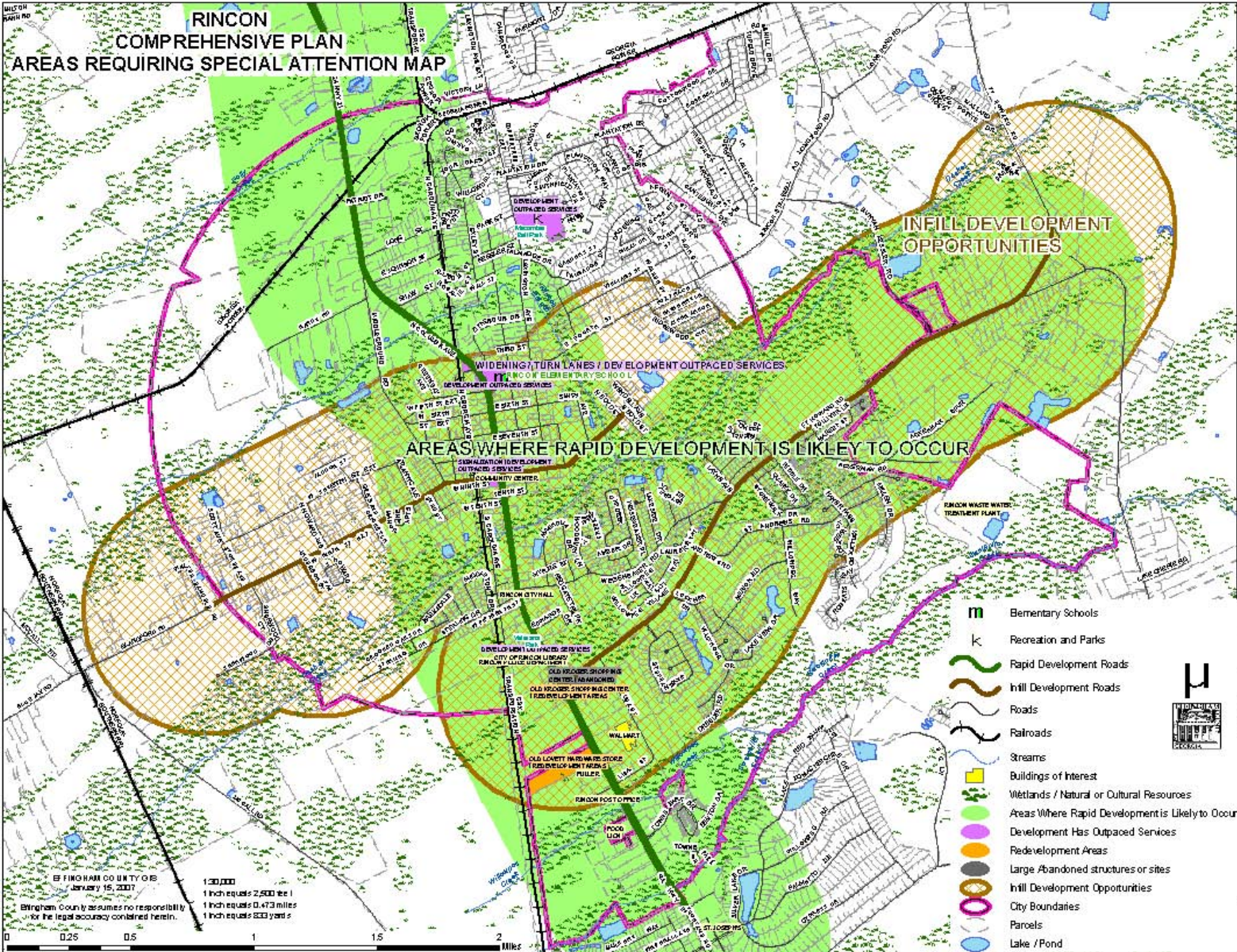
The old Kroger shopping Center on Highway 21 is abandoned.

Infill development opportunities

City officials have identified Ninth Street and Anderson Street, off Fort Howard Road as sites with development opportunities.

Areas of significant disinvestment and/or under-utilized areas

City officials note that redevelopment and infill development is very common in Rincon. Few properties remain in disrepair for long. No areas of disinvestment were identified.



III. Recommended Character Areas

The DCA defines Character Areas as: “A specific geographic area within the community that:

- Has unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced (such as a downtown, a historic district, a neighborhood, or a transportation corridor);
- Has potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance of future development through adequate planning and implementation (such as a strip commercial corridor that could be revitalized into more attractive village development pattern); or
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Table CA 1: Recommended Character Areas

<i>Character Area</i>	<i>Description/Predominant Characteristics</i>	<i>Suggested Development Strategy</i>	<i>Location</i>
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Table CA 1: Recommended Character Areas

Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
<p>Linear Greenspace, Trail & Pedestrian / Bike Network</p>	<p>Open space that follows natural and manmade linear features. Greenways can provide pedestrian linkages, and can serve as an alternative transportation network, accommodating commuting to work or shopping as well as recreational biking, skateboarding, walking and jogging.</p>	<p>Create these linkages by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking greenspaces into a pleasant network of greenways • Set aside land for pedestrian and bicycle connections between schools, churches, recreation areas, city centers, residential neighborhoods and commercial areas. 	<p>Proposed Scenic Byway.</p>
<p>Historic Area</p>	<p>Historic district or area containing features, landmarks, civic or cultural uses of historic interest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect historic properties from demolition and encourage rehabilitation with appropriate incentives, including National Register of Historic places designation, which enables eligibility for tax incentive programs. • Historic properties should be maintained or rehabilitated/restored according to the Secretary of the Interior's <i>Standards for Rehabilitation</i>. • New development in the area should be of scale and architectural design to fit well into the historic fabric of that area. • Pedestrian access and open space should be provided to enhance citizen enjoyment of the area. 	<p>West of Highway 21, from at least Fifth to Ninth Streets. Consider rails to trails project.</p>

Table CA 1: Recommended Character Areas

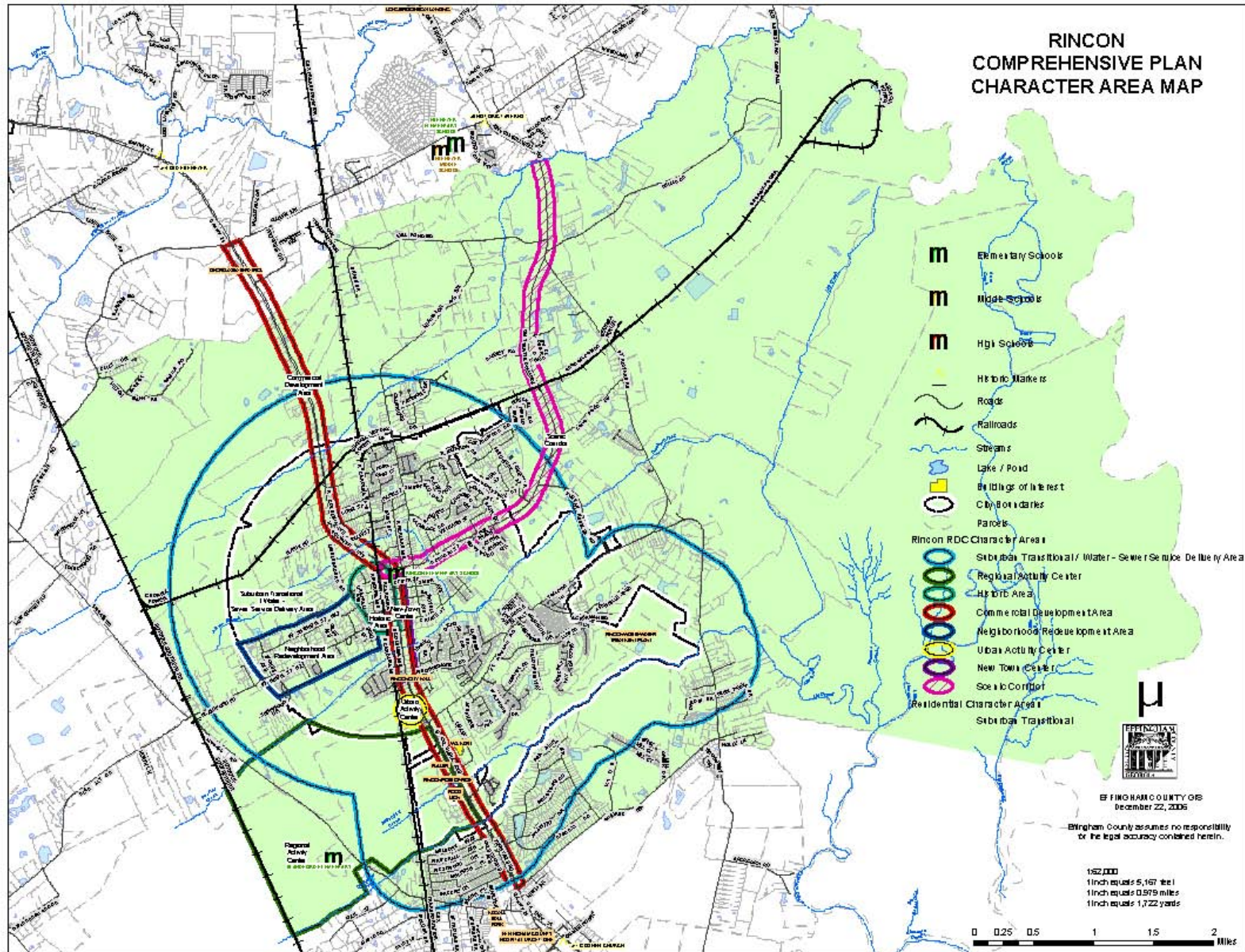
Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
<p>In-town Corridor/ Commercial Development Area</p>	<p>Land paralleling Hwy 21 in town that is likely to experience uncontrolled strip development if growth is not properly managed.</p> <p>Characterized by high degree of access by vehicular traffic; on-site parking; low degree of open space.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage development that is aesthetically appealing and, therefore, more marketable to prospective tenants by: • Building new commercial structures at the street front, taking up a portion of the oversize parking lot and creating a shopping “square” around a smaller internal parking lot. • Upgrading the appearance of existing older commercial buildings with façade improvement, new architectural elements, or awnings. • Reconfiguring the parking lot and circulation routes for automobiles. • Encourage pedestrian and bicycling amenities, including covered walkways, benches, lighting and bike racks. • Encourage landscaping and other appearance enhancements, trees in parking lots to provide shade and help reduce storm water runoff. 	<p>Highway 21.</p>
<p>Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area</p>	<p>A neighborhood that has declined sufficiently that housing conditions are bad, there may be large areas of vacant land or deteriorating, unoccupied structures.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preserve and rehabilitate original housing stock, while rebuilding, on the remaining land, a new, attractive neighborhood following the principles of traditional neighborhood development. • New neighborhood activity center at appropriate location, as a focal point for the neighborhood and a suitable location for a grocery store, hardware store, and similar appropriately-scaled retail establishments serving neighborhood residents. • Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections to encourage residents to walk/bike to work, shopping, or other destinations in the area. • New streets should be connected (i.e. minimize or prohibit cul-de-sacs) to disperse traffic, shorten walking/biking trips. • Design features that encourage safe, accessible streets should be employed – such as, narrower streets, on-street parking, sidewalks, street trees, and landscaped raised medians for minor collectors and wider streets. 	

Table CA 1: Recommended Character Areas

<i>Character Area</i>	<i>Description/Predominant Characteristics</i>	<i>Suggested Development Strategy</i>	<i>Location</i>
Urban Activity Center	The existing conglomeration of Police, Fire, Library and Recreational Facilities at Hwy 21 and 17 th Streets provides an opportunity for the City to highlight services and develop a center for diverse uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections should also be provided to encourage these residents to walk/bike to work, shopping, or other destinations in the area. • The appearance of the civic hub can immediately be improved through streetscaping enhancements (street lights, landscaping, etc.). 	Highway 21 and 17 th Street.
New Town Center	A newly-defined central business district and immediately surrounding commercial, residential and civic (community center) uses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote development/redevelopment in area • Design should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses. • Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking in the rear. • Enhance the pedestrian-friendly environment by adding sidewalks and creating other pedestrian-friendly trail/bike routes linking to neighboring residential areas and destinations such as the library, commercial clusters, parks, schools, etc. • New residential and commercial development should be concentrated in and around the area, including infill sites. • The appearance of the corridor can immediately be improved through streetscaping enhancements (street lights, landscaping, etc.). • In the longer term, enact design guidelines for new development, including minimal building setback requirements from the street • Provide basic access for pedestrians and bicycles, consider vehicular safety measures including driveway consolidation and raised medians (which also improve safety for bike/pedestrians). 	Hwy 21 from Fifth Street south to at least Tenth Street.

Table CA 1: Recommended Character Areas

Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
<p>Regional Activity Center and Light Industrial Area</p>	<p>Concentration of regionally-marketed commercial and retail centers, office and employment areas, higher-education facilities, sports and recreational complexes. These areas are characterized by high degree of access by vehicular traffic, and high transit use, including stops, shelters and transfer points; on-site parking; low degree of internal open space; high floor-area-ratio; large tracts of land, campus or unified development. Also may include Area used in low intensity manufacturing and warehousing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should include relatively high-density mix of retail, office, services, and employment to serve a regional market area. • Design should be very pedestrian oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses. • Include direct connections to nearby networks of greenspace or trails, available to pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians for both tourism and recreation purposes. • Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking in the rear. • Provide bike lanes or wide curb lanes to encourage bicycling and provide additional safety, provide conveniently located, preferably sheltered, bicycle parking at retail and office destinations and in multi-family dwellings. • Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional character, and should not include “franchise” or “corporate” architecture. • Develop as planned industrial park having adequate water, sewer, storm-water, and transportation infrastructure for all uses at build-out. Incorporate landscaping and site design to soften or shield views of buildings, parking lots and loading docks, etc. • Incorporate signage and lighting guidelines to enhance quality of development. 	<p>Research Forest Tract.</p>



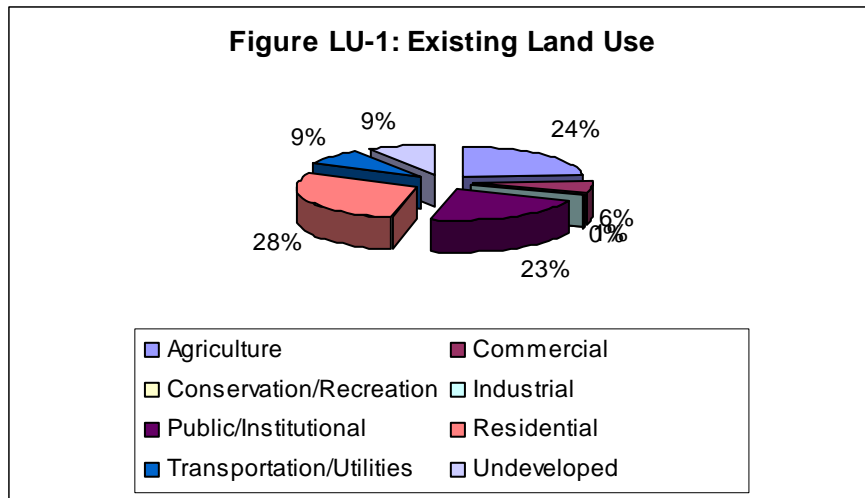
I. Existing Land Use

Table 1 shows the amount of land, number of parcels and percent allocation of each land use in the City of Springfield.

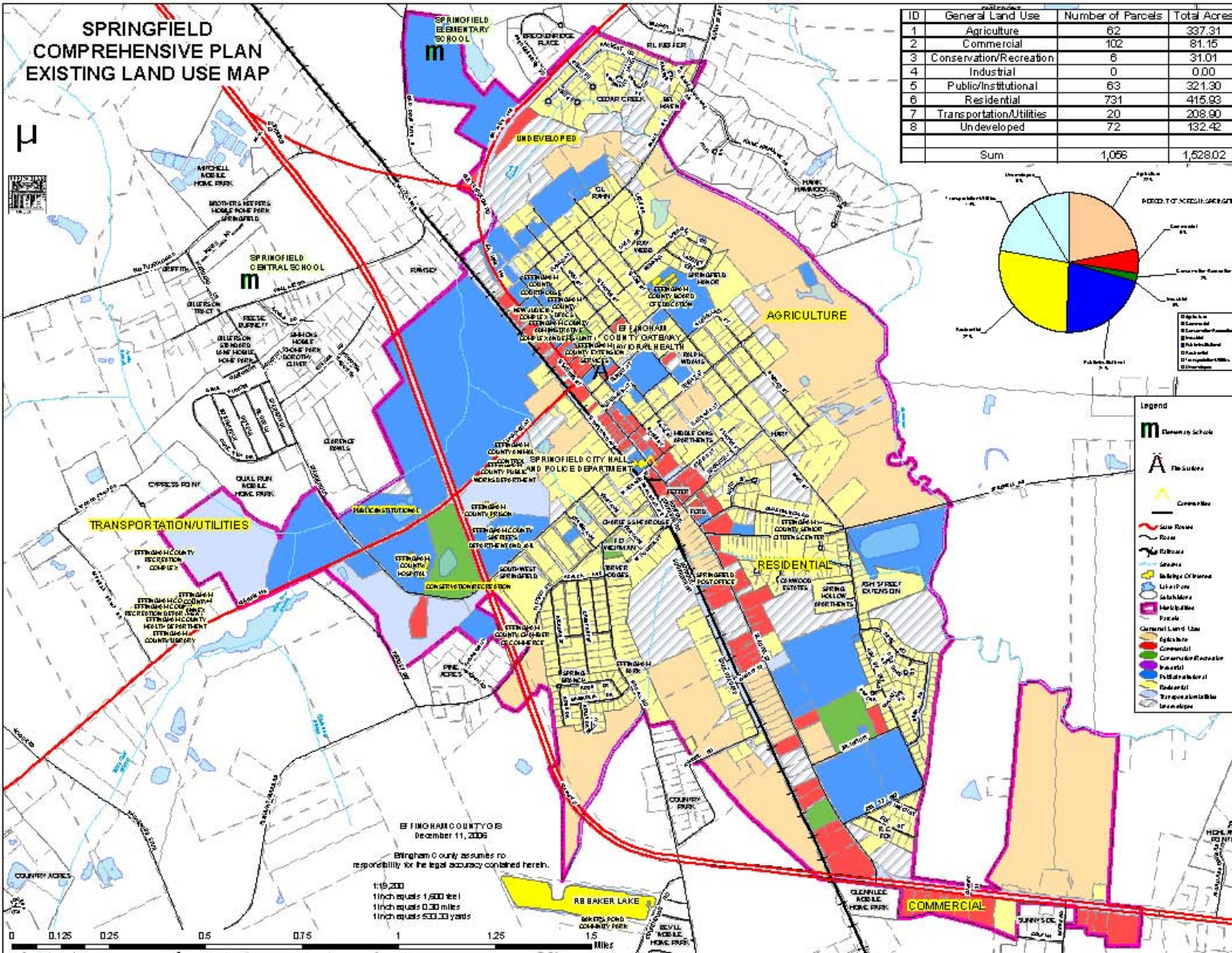
Table 1: Existing Land Uses in Springfield			
<i>Land Use Categories</i>	<i>Number of Parcels</i>	<i>Total Acres</i>	<i>Percent of City's Total Acreage</i>
Agriculture	59	344.64	24%
Commercial	103	84.52	6%
Conservation/Recreation	5	16.03	1%
Industrial	0	0.00	0%
Public/Institutional	64	325.69	23%
Residential	731	416.35	29%
Transportation/Utilities	16	125.50	9%
Undeveloped	69	130.41	9%
Total	1,047	1,443.14	100%

Source: Existing Land Use Map, City of Springfield

Figure 1: Existing Land Use in Springfield



Source: Existing Land Use Map, City of Springfield



Springfield's rural character is illustrated by the large proportion of its land that remains classified as agricultural use. Twenty four percent of the City's total acreage is classified as agriculture. To some extent, this can be explained by the annexation of land out to the Bypass. Intervening land is captured in annexations, but remains in agricultural use.

Springfield's land use is also influenced by residential development. Twenty-nine percent of the City's developed land is devoted to residential uses. Six percent is classified as commercial. The majority of commercial uses are situated downtown and along Highway 119 and Highway 21. The City may wish to re-evaluate the proportion of land allocated to residential versus commercial uses, as the cost of service delivery to residential areas is significantly higher.

A single parcel is classified for Industrial use but, as it is the site of the Industrial Development Authority's offices, it could also be considered commercial or Public/Institutional. Five parcels, or one percent are classified for Recreational/Conservation use. A surprising twenty three percent is classified for Public/Institutional.

Nine percent of the City's land is classified as undeveloped. Based on the map, it appears that much of this land is adjacent to existing residential development and, therefore, is likely to be used in future phases, or developed as infill. The City has been accommodating to annexation and water/sewer service requests. An annexation study or strategy should be considered, in order to more effectively guide residential growth into areas where infrastructure exists.

II. Areas Requiring Special Attention

These areas are defined by the DCA as:

- Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development;
- Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur;
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation;
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors);
- Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated;
- Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites);
- Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.

Natural or cultural resources

The City has abundant wetlands and groundwater recharge areas. Local ordinances regulate development in these areas.

Areas where rapid development is likely to occur

North of the City along Highway 21, and in the service area for the Industrial Park water system are areas where rapid development is likely to occur.

Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of public facilities and services

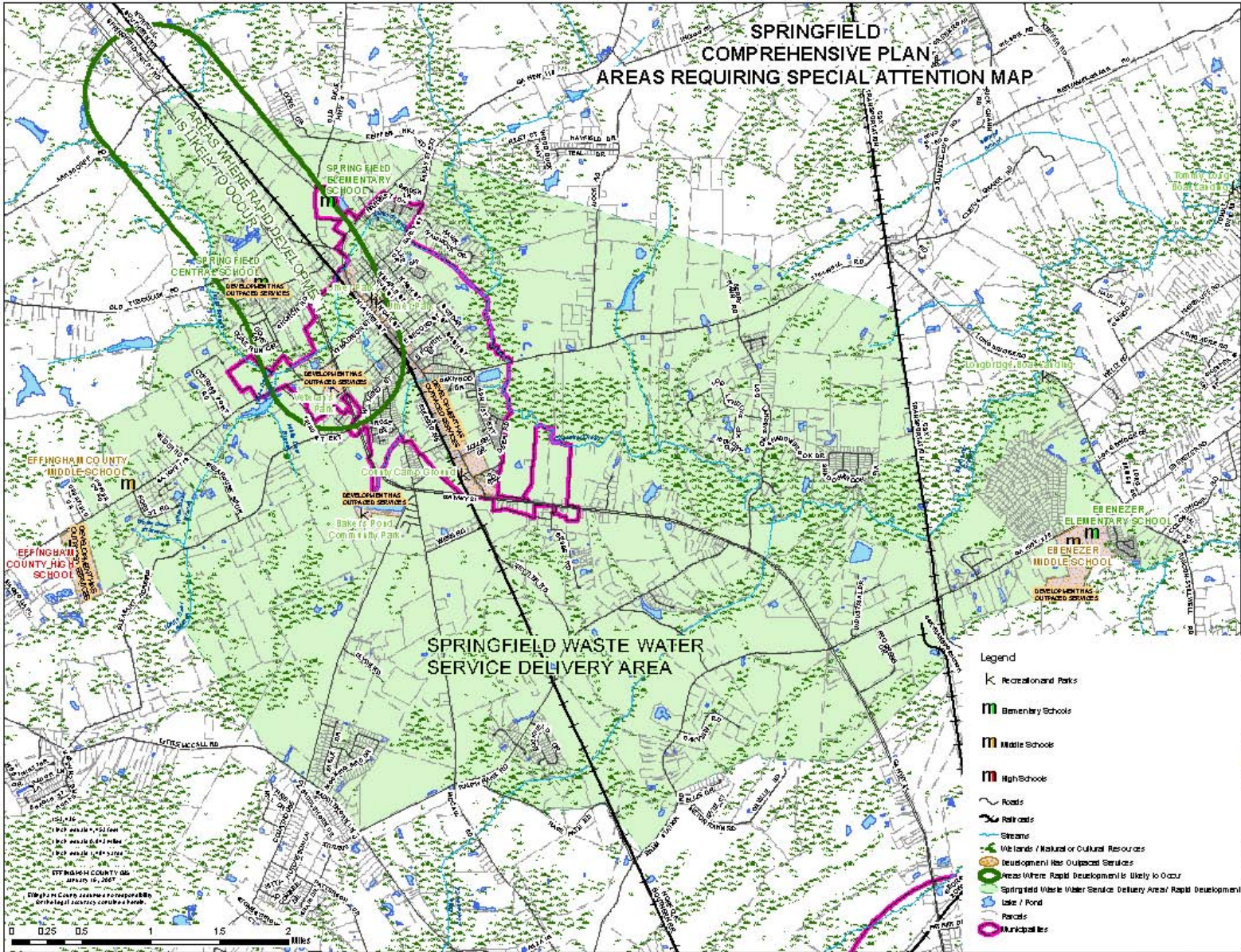
Schools and recreation facilities are struggling to keep up with the fast pace of residential growth. In addition, city services such as water and wastewater treatment are challenged to maintain a growth rate comparable to development of the residential sector. Transportation issues such as truck traffic through downtown continue to tax the City's local road network.

Redevelopment areas / Infill development opportunities / Areas of significant disinvestment and/or under-utilized areas

There are relatively few undeveloped parcels in the City's core area. However, there is great potential for redevelopment and infill for poorly maintained or damaged properties throughout the City.

Large abandoned structures or sites

There are no known large abandoned structures or sites within the City of Springfield.



III. Recommended Character Areas

The DCA defines Character Areas as: “A specific geographic area within the community that:

- Has unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced (such as a downtown, a historic district, a neighborhood, or a transportation corridor);
- Has potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance of future development through adequate planning and implementation (such as a strip commercial corridor that could be revitalized into more attractive village development pattern); or
- Requires special attention due to unique development issues (rapid change of development patterns, economic decline, etc.)

Each Character Area is a planning sub-area within the community where more detailed, small-area planning and implementation of certain policies, investments, incentives, or regulations may be applied in order to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence its future development patterns in a manner consistent with the community vision.”

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas			
Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
Suburban Transitional (Water Sewer Service Delivery Area)	Area where pressures for the typical types of suburban residential subdivision development are greatest (due to availability of water and sewer service). Without intervention, this area is likely to evolve with low pedestrian orientation, little or no transit, high open space, high to moderate degree of building separation, predominantly residential with scattered civic buildings and varied street patterns, often curvilinear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development should be a master-planned with mixed-uses. • Connectivity between each master planned development. • Good vehicular and pedestrian/bike connections to retail/commercial services as well as internal street connectivity, connectivity to adjacent properties/subdivisions, and multiple site access points. • Encourage compatible architecture styles that maintain the regional character, and do not include “franchise” or “corporate” architecture. • Connect to regional network of greenspace and trails, for both tourism and recreational purposes. • Promote street design that fosters traffic calming such as narrower residential streets, on-street parking, and addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. 	All land adjoining current city limits.

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

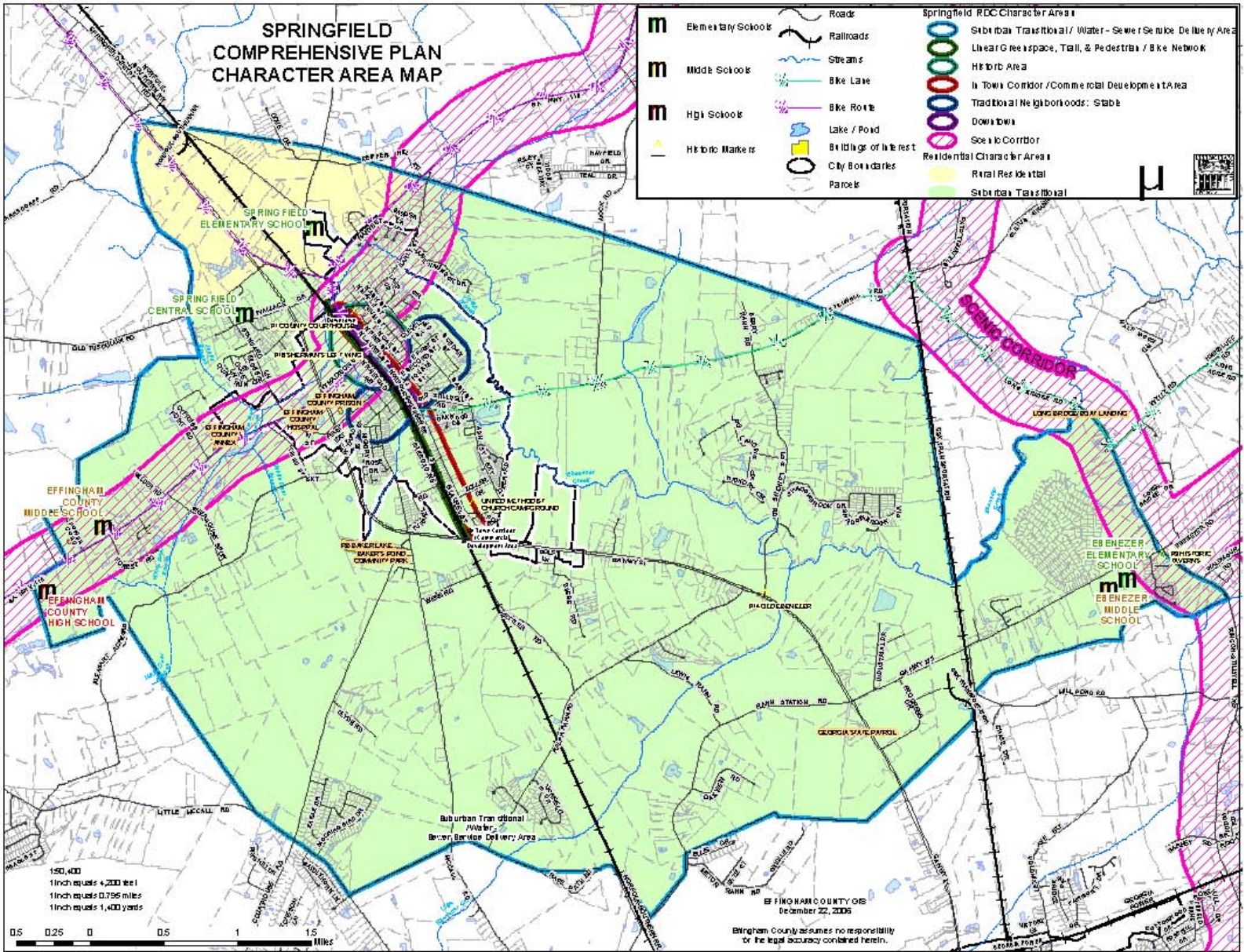
Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
<p>Linear Greenspace, Trail & Pedestrian / Bike Network</p>	<p>Open space that follows natural and manmade linear features. Greenways can provide pedestrian linkages, and can serve as an alternative transportation network, accommodating commuting to work or shopping as well as recreational biking, skateboarding, walking and jogging.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create these linkages by: • Linking greenspaces into a pleasant network of greenways • Set aside land for pedestrian and bicycle connections between schools, churches, recreation areas, city centers, residential neighborhoods and commercial areas. 	<p>Old railroad line along Laurel Street as it runs through town. Ebenezer Bike Trail and Proposed Scenic Byway.</p>
<p>Historic Area</p>	<p>Historic district or area containing features, landmarks, civic or cultural uses of historic interest.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect historic properties from demolition and encourage rehabilitation with appropriate incentives, including National Register of Historic places designation, which enables eligibility for tax incentive programs. • Historic properties should be maintained or rehabilitated/restored according to the Secretary of the Interior's <i>Standards for Rehabilitation</i>. • New development in the area should be of scale and architectural design to fit well into the historic fabric of that area. • Pedestrian access and open space should be provided to enhance citizen enjoyment of the area. 	<p>Downtown along Laurel Street and around the old Courthouse.</p>

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
<p>In town Corridor / Commercial Development Area</p>	<p>Developed or undeveloped land paralleling the route of a street or highway in town that is already or likely to experience uncontrolled strip development if growth is not properly managed.</p> <p>Characterized by high degree of access by vehicular traffic; on-site parking; low degree of open space.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage development that is aesthetically appealing and, therefore, more marketable to prospective tenants by: • Building new commercial structures at the street front, taking up a portion of the oversize parking lot and creating a shopping “square” around a smaller internal parking lot. • Gradually convert corridor to attractive boulevard with signage guiding visitors to downtown and scenic areas around the community. • Upgrading the appearance of existing older commercial buildings with façade improvement, new architectural elements, or awnings. • Streetscaping enhancements (street lights, landscaping, etc.) • Reconfiguring the parking lot and circulation routes for automobiles. • Encourage pedestrian and bicycling amenities, including benches, lighting and bike racks. • Encourage landscaping and other appearance enhancements, trees in parking lots to provide shade and help reduce storm water runoff. • In the longer term, enact design guidelines for new development, including minimal building setback requirements from the street, to ensure that the corridors become more attractive as properties develop or redevelop. 	<p>Laurel Street toward south end of town.</p>

Table CA-1: Recommended Character Areas

Character Area	Description/Predominant Characteristics	Suggested Development Strategy	Location
<p>Traditional Neighborhoods: Stable</p>	<p>Residential area in older part of the community typically developed prior to WWII. Characteristics include high pedestrian orientation, sidewalks, street trees, and street furniture; on-street parking; small, regular lots; limited open space; buildings close to or at the front property line; predominance of alleys; low degree of building separation; neighborhood-scale businesses scattered throughout the area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already exhibiting many of the characteristics of traditional neighborhood development (TND), these older neighborhoods should be encouraged to maintain their original character, with only compatible infill development permitted. • Focus on reinforcing stability by encouraging more homeownership and maintenance or upgrade of existing properties. • Vacant properties in the neighborhood offer an opportunity for infill development of new, architecturally compatible housing. • Include well-designed new neighborhood activity center at appropriate location, which would provide a focal point for the neighborhood, while also providing a suitable location for a grocery store, hardware store, and similar appropriately-scaled retail establishments serving neighborhood residents. • Strong pedestrian and bicycle connections should also be provided to encourage these residents to walk/bike to work, shopping, or other destinations in the area. 	<p>Residential area west of Laurel Street.</p>
<p>Urban Activity Center</p>	<p>The traditional central business district and immediately surrounding commercial, industrial, or mixed-use areas.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downtown should include relatively high-density mix of commercial and residential uses. • Residential development should reinforce the traditional town center through a combination of rehabilitation of historic buildings in the downtown area and compatible new infill development targeted to a broad range of income levels, including multi-family town homes, apartments, lofts, and condominiums. • Design should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses. 	



ANALYSIS OF CONSISTENCY WITH QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES (QCOs)

Introduction/Entire County

Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment

In 1999 the Board of the Department of Community Affairs adopted the Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) as a statement of the development patterns and options that will help Georgia preserve her unique cultural, natural and historic resources while looking to the future and developing to her fullest potential. The Office of Planning and Quality Growth has created the Quality Community Objectives Assessment to assist local governments in evaluating their progress towards sustainable and livable communities.

This assessment is meant to give a community an idea of how it is progressing toward reaching these objectives set by the Department, but no community will be judged on progress. The assessment is a tool for use at the beginning of the comprehensive planning process, much like a demographic analysis or a land use map, showing a community “you are here.” Each of the fifteen QCOs has a set of yes/no questions, with additional space available for assessors’ comments. The questions focus on local ordinances, policies, and organizational strategies intended to create and expand quality growth principles.

A majority of “yes” answers for an objective may indicate that the community has in place many of the governmental options for managing development patterns. “No’s” may provide guidance as to how to focus planning and implementation efforts for those governments seeking to achieve these Quality Community Objectives.

Some assessors may be able to answer these questions without much research, particularly in communities with few or no land use controls. Others may need to review land use ordinances and zoning regulations to find the answers, but this initial assessment is meant to provide an overall view of the community’s policies, not an in-depth analysis. There are no right or wrong answers to this assessment. Its merit lies in completion of the document and the ensuing discussions regarding future development patterns as governments undergo the comprehensive planning process.

Should a community decide to pursue a particular objective, it may consider a “yes” to each statement a benchmark toward achievement. Please be aware, however, that this assessment is an initial step. Local governments striving for excellence in quality growth may consider additional measures to meet local goals. For technical assistance on implementing the policies, ordinances

and organizational structures referenced in the assessment please link to OPQG's Assistance with Planning and Quality Growth.

Unincorporated Effingham

<i>Development Patterns</i>		
Traditional Neighborhoods		
Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.		X
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development “by right” so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.		X
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.		X
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.		X
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.		X
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.		X
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.		X
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.		X
9. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.		X

- The Planned Development District in the Effingham County Zoning Ordinance will allow developers to present mixed use developments. However, the smallest general mixed use development allowed is 1,000 acres. A residential mixed use district may be 75 acres or greater. Neo-traditional development is not allowed by right.
- There are no requirements for tree plantings. Clear-cutting of property, both planted pine and mixed hardwood forests, is a common practice. Preservation of trees is only a recommendation.
- Sidewalks are typically not present in the unincorporated County. They are not required in new developments.

- Almost all schools in the unincorporated areas of the County are located on state highways (see below) which carry high traffic volumes and do not have sidewalks or bike lanes. Therefore, students cannot typically walk or bike safely to school. Some of the elementary schools could potentially have students walk or bike to school, but this is not a common practice. A small development located between Marlow Elementary and New Marlow Elementary does provide walkways to the schools away from the state highway.

School	Located on a State Highway
Effingham County High School	X
South Effingham High School	X
Effingham County Middle School	X
South Effingham Middle School	X
Ebenezer Middle School	X
Ebenezer Elementary School	X
Springfield Elementary School (Springfield)	X
Springfield Central School	
Rincon Elementary School (Rincon)	
South Effingham Elementary School	
Marlow Elementary School	X
New Marlow Elementary School	X
Sandhill Elementary School	
Guyton Elementary School (Guyton)	X

Infill Development		
Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.		X
2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.		X
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.		X
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	X (limited)	
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.		X

- As a historically agricultural community, most development in the County is greenfield development. There are some opportunities, particularly along Highway 21 just north of Rincon, for greyfield development.
- The Effingham Industrial Park is located at the intersection of Highway 21 and Highway 275, across from the future Effingham campus of Savannah Technical College. This presents an opportunity for nodal development centered on vocational education and employment (see character areas for more detail).

Sense of Place		
Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.		X
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.	X	
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.		X
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	X	
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.		X
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.		x

- Much of the development in the south end of the County does not reflect historic development patterns or vernacular styles associated with historic communities in Effingham County. The north end of the County, where development is less prevalent, still maintains a largely agricultural character with the traditional development of compact communities located at crossroads.
- Ebenezer is largely recognized as an important historic and cultural resource in Effingham County. The New Ebenezer Retreat Center is a private retreat center which aids in preserving the character of the area and promoting the historic, cultural, and natural resources of the area. However, this area is facing development pressures which should be addressed in the Community Agenda.
- New sign ordinance was recently passed.

- The County recently completed the “Effingham County Farmland Preservation Project” in May 2006. This report presents options for farmland protection, but protection plans have not yet been developed.

Transportation Alternatives		
Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We have public transportation in our community.		X
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	X	
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.		X
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.		X
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.		X
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.		X
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.		X

- New developments typically include only one entry/exit and are not required to connect to adjacent developments. The school administration has supported this idea in order to facilitate more efficient pick-up/drop-off of students. However, previous efforts to modify the ordinances to require this have been unsuccessful.
- Sidewalks are uncommon in the unincorporated areas and are not required in new developments.
- Portions of Highway 119 and Highway 17 are indicated on the Georgia Bicycle Statewide Network. In addition, the County has developed a bicycle route from downtown Springfield to Ebenezer. However, there is not a bicycle plan for the development of future routes in the County.

Regional Identity
Each region should promote and preserve a regional “identity,” or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.		X
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	X	
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).	X	
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.		X
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.		
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.		X

- Salzburger, Ratchford Sausage and Needmore Farms Products are local products.

Resource Conservation		
Heritage Preservation		
The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.		X
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.		X
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.		X
Open Space Preservation		
New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.	X	
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.		X
3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.		X

4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.		X
Environmental Protection		
Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.	X	
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.		X
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.		X
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.		X
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.		X
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.		X
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.	X	
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).		X

- County has a buffer ordinance that requires some tree protection and planting.

Social and Economic Development			
Growth Preparedness			
Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	X		Check impact fee ord.
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.		X	
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.		X	
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.		X	

5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	X		
6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.		X	
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.		X	
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.		X	
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.		X	
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.		X	
Appropriate Businesses			
The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.			
Statement	Yes	No	
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.	X		
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.	X		
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.		X	
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.		X	

- The Economic Development Authority (EDA) has acquired significant areas of property to support their business development strategy.
- The EDA seeks to create synergy among allied industries.

Employment Options		
A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.		X
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	X	

3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	X	
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	X	

- The highest area competition for jobs exists in the professional and managerial jobs sector.

Housing Choices		
A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.		X
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	X	
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).	X	
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.		X
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or “neo-traditional” development.		X
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	X	
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	X	
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.	X	
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.		X
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.		X
Educational Opportunities		
Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.	X	
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	X	
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	X	

4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	X	
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- To attract industry, the EDA has obtained credit vouchers for the Effingham County campus of Savannah Technical Institute.
- Creating additional job opportunities for college graduates is a priority for the County.

Governmental Relations			
Regional Solutions			
Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.			
Statement	Yes	No	
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	X		
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.		X	
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	X		
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.		X	
Regional Cooperation			
Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.			
Statement	Yes	No	Comment
1. We plan jointly with our cities and County for comprehensive planning purposes.	X		
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.		X	
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft regionwide strategies.	X		
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.		X	

Development Patterns

Traditional Neighborhoods

Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.

Statement	Yes	No
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.		X
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "by right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.		X
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.		X
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.		X
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.		X
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	X	
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	X	
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	X	
9. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.	X	

- The City has old, uneven sidewalks in historic downtown area, which features restaurants, grocery, bank and post office within easy walking distance.

Infill Development

Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.

Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.		
2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.		X
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.		X
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	X	

5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.	X	
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- Infill development is gradual, as there is an abundance of undeveloped land at the City’s boundaries.
- Development in small lots is not allowed.
- There is much concern with regard to appropriate dense, multi-family development.

Sense of Place		
Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.		X
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.		X
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.		X
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.		X
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.		X
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.		X

- The City’s historic downtown is distinctive.

Transportation Alternatives		
Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We have public transportation in our community.		X
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.		X
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.		X
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.		X

5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	X	
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.		X
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	X	

- There is no public transportation in the City or County.
- Historic Guyton is pedestrian friendly.
- The City is developing a multi use trail along the old Central railroad tracks on Highway 17.
- The City allows shared parking.

Regional Identity		
Each region should promote and preserve a regional “identity,” or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.		X
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.		X
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).		X
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development’s regional tourism partnership.		X
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.		X
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.		X

- Architectural trends in Guyton’s new residential developments do not conform to the regional style.

Resource Conservation		
Heritage Preservation		
The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.	X	

2. We have an active historic preservation commission.	X	
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.		X

- The historic City limits are the boundary of the historic district.
- A historic preservation commission is forming.

Open Space Preservation		
New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.		X
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.		X
3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.		X
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.		X

- No regulations (such as conservation subdivision ordinance) in place to promote or require preservation of greenspace.

Environmental Protection		
Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.		X
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.		X
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.	X	
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.		X
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.	X	
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	X	

7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.		X
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).		X

- No regulations in place to promote or require preservation of natural resources, except trees.

Social and Economic Development		
Growth Preparedness		
Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	X	
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	X	
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.		X
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.		X
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	X	
6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.		X
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	X	
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.		X
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.		X
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.		X

- The zoning ordinance has not been updated in recent times.
- New growth goes where land is available—not where infrastructure is ready.

Appropriate Businesses		
The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.		X
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.		X
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.		X
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.		X

- The Effingham County Industrial Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce serve the entire County. No city organization recruits businesses.

Employment Options		
A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.		X
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.		X
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	X	
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	X	
Housing Choices		
A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.	X	
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	X	
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).	X	
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.	X	

5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or “neo-traditional” development.	X	
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.		X
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.		X
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.		X
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.		X
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.	X	

- High density developments are not encouraged.
- The City allows accessory apartments.
- Residents can easily find housing in all price ranges.
- Downtown loft living is available.

Educational Opportunities		
Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.		X
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.		X
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	X	
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.		

- Guyton is home to an elementary school. Middle and High schools are nearby.
- Savannah Technical College is building a campus in the County.
- Guyton is close to numerous four-year colleges and universities in Chatham and Bulloch counties.

<i>Governmental Relations</i>
Regional Solutions
Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.

Statement	Yes	No
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	X	
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	X	
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	X	
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	X	

- The City has a representative on the Board of the Industrial Development Authority.

Regional Cooperation		
Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We plan jointly with our cities and County for comprehensive planning purposes.	X	
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	X	
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft regionwide strategies.	X	
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	X	

- The City cooperates with the County on planning service delivery areas.

Development Patterns

Traditional Neighborhoods

Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.

Statement	Yes	No
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.		X
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development “by right” so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.		X
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	X	
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.		X
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.		X
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	X	
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.		X
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.		X
9. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.	X	

- Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning allows for mixed uses—including conservation areas—but applies only to tracts of 500 acres or more.
- The City enforces a Tree Ordinance, which requires one street tree per every 40’ of right-of-way.
- The City may encourage development in uplands near streams, requiring extensive buffers and trails.
- The City is working to provide a walking trail on city-owned property adjacent to the new YMCA center.

Infill Development

Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.

Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.		X
2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.		X
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.		X
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).		X
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.		X

- Infill development is common, as Rincon property is desirable for commercial development.
- Development in small (less than 8,500 square foot) lots is not allowed. City officials are considering raising the minimum lot size for new development to 12,000 square feet.
- City officials may create a new downtown overlay to encourage appropriate development.

Sense of Place		
Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.		X
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.		X
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.		X
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	X	
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.		X
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.		NA

- Signage is regulated, and the City may consider architectural guidelines for new development.
- A corridor management plan for Highway 21 and Fort Howard Road is needed.

Transportation Alternatives		
Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We have public transportation in our community.		X
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.		X
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.		X
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	X	
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	X	
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.		X
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.		X

- There is no public transportation in the City or County.
- New development is not required to provide more than one entry/exit, which leads to congestion.
- Historic Rincon is pedestrian friendly; the City requires sidewalks in new development, and may consider a multi-use trail following the railroad tracks along Carolina and Georgia Avenues.
- No shared parking is allowed; the City requires 5.5 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of building area.

Regional Identity		
Each region should promote and preserve a regional “identity,” or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.		X
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.		X
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).		X
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development’s regional tourism partnership.		X

5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.		X
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.		X

- Architectural trends in Rincon do not conform to the regional style. The City may consider design guidelines.

Resource Conservation		
Heritage Preservation		
The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.		X
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.		X
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.		X

- No regulations in place to promote or require preservation of historic buildings.
- The City may establish a Historic Preservation Commission to address preservation.

Open Space Preservation		
New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.		X
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.		X
3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.		X
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.		X

- No regulations (such as conservation subdivision ordinance) in place to promote or require preservation of greenspace.
- The City may consider regulations to encourage recreational opportunities in new development.

Environmental Protection		
Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.		X
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.		X
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.		X
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.		X
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.	X	
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	X	
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.		X
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	X	

- No regulations in place to promote or require preservation of natural resources, except trees.

<i>Social and Economic Development</i>		
Growth Preparedness		
Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.		X

2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.		X
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	X	
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.		X
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	X	
6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.		X
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.		X
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.		X
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.		X
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.		X

- The “Growth Management Code” has been amended to include items such as a tree ordinance, PUD focus on smart growth principles, and landscape buffers.
- New growth goes where land is available—not where infrastructure is ready.

Appropriate Businesses		
The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.		X
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.		X
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.		X
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.		X

- The Effingham County Industrial Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce serve the entire County. No city organization recruits businesses.

Housing Choices		
A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.		X
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	X	
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).	X	
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.		X
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or “neo-traditional” development.		X
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	X	
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	X	
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.		X
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.		X
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.		X

- High density development and accessory apartments are not encouraged.
- Residents can easily find housing in all price ranges.

Educational Opportunities		
Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.		X
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.		X
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	X	
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	X (limited)	

- Rincon is home to an elementary school. Middle and High schools are nearby.

- Savannah Technical College is building a campus in the County.
- Rincon is close to numerous four-year colleges and universities in Chatham and Bulloch counties.

Governmental Relations		
Regional Solutions		
Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	X	
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.		X
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.		X
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.		X

- The City has a representative on the Board of the Industrial Development Authority.

Regional Cooperation		
Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We plan jointly with our cities and County for comprehensive planning purposes.		X
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.		X
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft regionwide strategies.		X
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.		X

- The City cooperates with the County on planning service delivery areas.

Development Patterns

Traditional Neighborhoods

Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.

Statement	Yes	No
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.		X
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "by right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.		X
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.		X
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.		X
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	X	
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	X	
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	X	
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.		X
9. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.		X

- The City has an extensive sidewalk network in core area, which features restaurants, grocery, bank and post office within easy walking distance.

Infill Development

Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.

Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.		X
2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.		X
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.		X
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).		X

5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.		X
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- Infill development is not common, as there is an abundance of undeveloped land at the City’s boundaries.

Sense of Place		
Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.		X
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.		X
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.		X
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	X	
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.		X
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.		X

- The City’s historic downtown is distinctive.
- Signage is regulated.

Transportation Alternatives		
Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We have public transportation in our community.		X
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.		X
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	X	
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.		X

5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.		X
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	X	
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	X	

- There is no public transportation in the City or County.
- Historic Springfield is pedestrian friendly.

Regional Identity		
Each region should promote and preserve a regional “identity,” or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.		X
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.		X
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).		X
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development’s regional tourism partnership.		X
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.		X
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.		X

- Architectural trends in Springfield’s new residential developments do not conform to the regional style.

Resource Conservation		
Heritage Preservation		
The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.		X
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.	X	

3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.		X
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- The Effingham County Historic Society is active in Springfield.

Open Space Preservation		
New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.		X
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.		X
3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.		X
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.		X

- No regulations (such as conservation subdivision ordinance) in place to promote or require preservation of greenspace.

Environmental Protection		
Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.		X
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.		X
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.		X
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.		X
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.		X
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.		X
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.		X

8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).		X
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- The City has ordinances to regulate development in wetlands and groundwater recharge areas.

Social and Economic Development		
Growth Preparedness		
Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.		X
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.		X
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.		X
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	X	
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.		X
6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.		X
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.		X
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.		X
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.	X	
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.		X

- The zoning ordinance is currently under review.
- New growth is occurring in the City’s Industrial Park water system service area, which is not adjacent to the urban core.

Appropriate Businesses		
The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.		X
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.		X
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.		X
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.		X

- The Effingham County Industrial Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce serve the entire County.

Employment Options		
A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.		X
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	X	
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	X	
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	X	

- Jobs are available for all levels of ability.

Housing Choices		
A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.	X	
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	X	

3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).	X	
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.		X
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or “neo-traditional” development.		X
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	X	
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	X	
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.		X
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.		X
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.		X

- The City allows accessory apartments.
- Residents can easily find housing in all price ranges.
- Multi family developments are allowed.

Educational Opportunities		
Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.		
Statement	Yes	No
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.		X
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.		X
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	X	
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	X	

- Springfield is home to an elementary school. Middle and High schools are nearby.
- Savannah Technical College is building a campus in the County.
- Springfield is close to numerous four-year colleges and universities in Chatham and Bulloch counties.

Governmental Relations

Regional Solutions

Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.

Statement	Yes	No
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.		X
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.		X
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	X	
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.		X

- The City has a representative on the Board of the Industrial Development Authority.

Regional Cooperation

Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.

Statement	Yes	No
1. We plan jointly with our cities and County for comprehensive planning purposes.	X	
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	X	
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft regionwide strategies.	X	
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	X	

- The City cooperates with the County on planning service delivery areas.
- The Service Delivery Area was approved with the County in 2005
- The City meets with neighboring jurisdictions at the Annual County Retreat and quarterly meetings.

SUPPORTING ANALYSIS OF DATA AND INFORMATION

Introduction/Entire County

The Georgia General Assembly adopted the “Service Delivery Strategy Act” (OCGA 36-70) in 1997. This Act requires all counties and cities in Georgia to prepare and adopt Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) for their jurisdictions on a Countywide basis.

Such SDS plans were to be approved and adopted by July 1, 1999. The intent of the legislation was to provide a framework within which local governments in each County and city could provide an efficient and effective means of service delivery for their citizens.

The SDS preparation process is intended minimize the duplication of services and competition between local governments and to resolve inefficiencies in the delivery of those services. It was also to provide a mechanism to resolve disputes over local government service delivery, funding equity, and land use. The SDS preparation process provides a tool for addressing incompatible land use plans, as well an agreement on how governments would provide funding for each specific service in each area.

Effingham County and the Cities of Guyton, and Springfield each participated in the original SDS process in 1999, signing the final document on March 24, 1999. The SDS was subsequently updated in 2000, and the final document was approved on January 31, 2001. The City of Rincon was not a signatory of the 2000 document.

With the inception of the Department of Community Affairs’ rule changes effective May 1, 2005, the SDS and accompanying agreement must be addressed in conjunction with the preparation of the new local Comprehensive Plan. Table 1 provides a summary of the SDS and funding sources.

Table 1: Effingham County Service Delivery Strategy					
<i>Service Provided</i>	<i>Service Provided By</i>				<i>Inconsistencies</i>
	<i>Effingham County</i>	<i>City of Guyton</i>	<i>City of Rincon</i>	<i>City of Springfield</i>	
Animal Control	X				None
Building Inspection, Permits, Planning, Subdivision Review, and Zoning	X	X	X	X	None
Code Enforcement	X	X	X	X	None

Table 1: Effingham County Service Delivery Strategy					
<i>Service Provided</i>	<i>Service Provided By</i>				<i>Inconsistencies</i>
	<i>Effingham County</i>	<i>City of Guyton</i>	<i>City of Rincon</i>	<i>City of Springfield</i>	
Courts	X	X	X	X	None
Drainage Maintenance	X	X	X	X	None
E911/Communication	X				None
Economic Development	Industrial Development Authority and Development Authority of Effingham County				None
Emergency Management	X				None
Emergency Medical Service	X				None
Engineering (Design)	X	X	X	X	None
Extension Service	UGA Extension Service				None
Fire Protection (provided by each municipality located in a fire district, and independent Fire Dept within other parts of the County)	X	X	X	X	None
Forestry	Georgia Forestry Service				None
GIS/Mapping	X				None
Hospital	Hospital Authority				None
Indigent Defense	X				None
Jail	X				None
Landfill	X				None
Law Enforcement	X	X	X	X	None
Parks and Recreation	X	X	X	X	None
Public Health Service	Health Department				None
Public Works (Administrative)	X	X	X	X	None
Registrar	X	X	X	X	None
Road/Street Construction	X	X	X	X	None
Road/Street Maintenance	X	X	X	X	None
Senior Citizen Programs	X		X		None
Social Service	Division of Family and Children Services				None
Solid Waste Collection	X	X	X	X	None
Solid Waste Management	X	X	X	X	None
Storm Water Collection		X	X	X	None

Table 1: Effingham County Service Delivery Strategy					
<i>Service Provided</i>	<i>Service Provided By</i>				<i>Inconsistencies</i>
	<i>Effingham County</i>	<i>City of Guyton</i>	<i>City of Rincon</i>	<i>City of Springfield</i>	
Tax Assessment	X				None
Tax Collection	X	X	X	X	None
Wastewater Collection and Treatment (service may extend within ½ -mile of municipal boundary)	X (added 2000)	X	X	X	None
Water Supply and Distribution (service may extend within ½ -mile of municipal boundary)	X (added 2000)	X	X	X	None

I. Analysis

Population

- The projected population increase of Effingham County (80,000 residents by 2030) according to the 2006 Georgia Tech population study will cause increased strain on administrative staff and infrastructure – particularly water supply and highway infrastructure.
- The relative aging of the population in the County will increase the demand for health services and diversified recreational and cultural opportunities that are suited to the needs of citizens aged 55 years and older.
- The increase in Effingham’s Hispanic population will increase the need for Spanish-language services and support. By 2030, it is projected that Hispanics will make up 3 percent of the City’s population.
- Effingham’s median income is \$55,083. While median income is expected to increase, the demand for affordable housing will remain relatively high throughout the County.

Economic Development

- Employment in the County has nearly doubled between 1990 and 2005 (from 4,400 jobs to 8,412 jobs). As the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) in cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce works to expand and recruit new industry to the county, more high wage manufacturing jobs will become available.
- Manufacturing accounts for 21% of the labor force; other dominant employers include local government, construction, and accommodation/food services.
- Thirty-three percent of the County’s labor force works in Effingham County. Approximately 17,000 people work outside of the County. A challenge in the near future will be to retain employees within the county while also attracting workers from surrounding areas.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- The County has groundwater recharge areas and wetlands within its jurisdictional boundaries. The County has adopted, implemented and is enforcing the appropriate regulations consistent with the DNR’s Rules for Environmental Planning.
- To date there has been no regional effort to develop or implement a Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP). The intake point lies within a different governmental jurisdiction (Effingham County) from the owner/operator (City of Savannah), making implementation of a SWPP complex. However, now that Effingham County is served by the Industrial and Domestic Water Plant (on Hwy 21, owned by the City of Savannah),

water supply and watershed protection has become a more immediate and tangible priority for Effingham County.

- Thirty-eight percent of total land area, or 117,020 acres, in the County consists of wetlands. Developable land should be limited to uplands, with restrictions placed on developments adjacent to wetlands, so that the amount of wetland in the County remains constant.
- The County does not have a historic preservation ordinance which would provide a layer of protection from incompatible development that compromises the County's historic resources. An ordinance should be drafted that can be shared by the County and each of the cities, along with an inventory of historic resources.
- There are eligible properties in the County that should be nominated for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places.
- The Historic Effingham-Ebenezer Scenic Byway was accepted into the State DOT program in October 2006. Drafting a corridor management plan and notifying property owners is the next step in the designation process.

Housing

- Greenfield development has accounted for most of the new housing and will continue to do so. The County will need to encourage more infill development adjacent to existing centers (especially surrounding the three cities) and update the zoning ordinance to allow more mixed-uses by right.
- The total number of occupied housing units in the County increased from 6,900 in 1990 to 10,869 in 2000, most of which met the demand for single family housing. Demand for multi-family owner and renter housing will measurably increase as the community matures. The demand for both large lot and small lot subdivisions will also increase, driven by an increasingly older and more affluent population seeking more specialized niche communities.
- The median age of housing structures in 2000 was 15 years, reflecting the high rate of housing production. Only about half of the population lived in the same house five years before the 2000 census was taken, and approximately one quarter of all households lived somewhere else before 2000.
- Housing production and population growth accelerated to over 4.6 percent between 2000 and 2005. Growth is not expected to peak until after 2010.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- The County is included in the Regional Comprehensive Plan and related Short Term Work Program.

- The County is part of a regional water advisory committee that decides how much groundwater can be taken and distributed from the Floridian Aquifer.
- The local governments in Effingham County should value each community's uniqueness, while embracing their interdependence. The local governments need to be aware that all governments are affected by the decisions of all individual governing bodies.

Transportation Systems

- There are two state highways running north/south through the county. GA Hwy 21 roughly splits the county in two, and is the main commercial corridor in the county. Further growth is anticipated along this corridor and plans for improving the facilities and intersections need to be made prior to DOT involvement, to ensure that the County is a participant in the transportation plans and not simply dictated to by the state.
- The County needs to continue to champion the proposed Effingham Parkway to relieve pressure off of the only existing access to I-95.
- U.S. highway 80 crosses the southwest corner of the county. Interstate 16 also crosses the southwest corner of the county a bit further west of US 80. The county's only interstate exit is on I -16 at Old River Road.
- Streets in new developments in the County are typically not connected to, or compatible with, existing networks. Streets in new developments should be required to connect with existing networks in subdivisions.
- County trails are not linked with those of neighboring communities, the region and the state. Better linkages between communities needs to be encouraged by the local government, with the cooperation of landowners in the County.

II. Compliance with Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria

Effingham County has implemented environmental regulations for the protection of Wetlands and Groundwater Recharge Areas consistent with DNR's Rules for Environmental Planning.

III. Analysis of Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy

Effingham County is currently working on fire and water service delivery areas with the County and other cities.

I. Analysis

Population

- The projected population increase of the City of Guyton will cause increased strain on administrative staff and infrastructure particularly water supply and storage, as well as wastewater treatment and capacity.
- Age projections for Guyton show extremely slow growth in the ages of 25-34. It is likely that this age group is moving to locations that offer more employment opportunities than Guyton.
- The relative aging of the population in Guyton will increase the demand for health services and diversified recreational and cultural opportunities that are suited to the needs of citizens aged 55 years and older.
- Age distribution projections show an increase in the age groups of 0 to 4 and 5 to 13, likely resulting in an increased demand for park space, recreational facilities, day care, and elementary school facilities.
- The increase in Guyton's Hispanic population will increase the need for Spanish-language services and support. By 2030, it is projected that Hispanics will make up over 2 percent of the City's population.
- In 2000, Guyton's per capita income was the lowest of all three municipalities in Effingham County at \$12,409. The median income for the City lies between \$20,000 and \$29,999, but is becoming more evenly distributed. Although the percentage of the population earning an income below the poverty level as decreased slightly to be 20 percent in 2000, these trends are expected to continue throughout the planning period which will likely increase the demand for affordable housing and other services within the City.

Economic Development

- Quality of life issues are extremely important to the residents of Guyton, for this reason, public perceptions and the City's ordinances are large factors in commercial growth. The City needs to have a clear vision for future economic development to improve the economy of the City.
- Guyton is the smallest of the three unincorporated cities in Effingham County with only 13 percent of the labor force working in the City. The residents working outside of the City are not as connected to local issues. For these reasons, the City needs to work on creating and expanding businesses within the City and expanding employment in industry sectors that will increase base industries.

- The largest sectors in Guyton's economy are: Education, health, and social services; Construction; Retail Trade; Manufacturing; and Transportation, warehousing, and utilities. All of the sectors of the economy are growing with the exception of the Manufacturing sector which has declined since 1980.
- Guyton lags severely behind the State and the Nation in economic statistics. The median of Guyton income of \$27,679 is approximately 60 percent of the Effingham County's median income of \$46,505. Forty-three percent of Guyton's population is not in the labor force, which is higher than the State percentage of 34 percent.
- As a percentage of total personal income in the City, wages and salary have decreased while the percentage of income gained from self-employment, social security, public assistance, and other types of income has increased.
- Eighty-seven percent of the employed residents in Guyton work outside of the City, and the mean travel time to work is 29 minutes. Fifty-six percent of the labor force travels to work between six o'clock AM and eight o'clock AM putting a large strain on the transportation system during these hours. In addition, as the price of gasoline rises, commuting communities such as Guyton may see a decrease in residents who are less willing to commute long distances.
- More than a quarter of the City's population age 25 and over did not finish high school.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- A floodplain ordinance should be adopted to limit development in the floodplain and prohibit certain activities harmful to water quality.
- There are eligible properties in Guyton that should be nominated for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places.
- Consensus building activities supporting preservation should be implemented through educational programs for the public about the necessity for preservation in partnership with the Guyton Historical Society.
- The Historic Effingham-Ebenezer Scenic Byway was accepted into the State DOT program in October 2006. Drafting a corridor management plan and notifying property owners is the next step in the designation process.

Community Facilities and Services

- The City of Guyton is currently experiencing rapid growth in population and has increased its boundaries. The increase in population size and service delivery area will proportionately increase the request for services, which will put a strain on existing systems and challenge City leaders to meet the demand for services.
- The water withdrawal cap is severely limiting the City's water supply options, and alternative sources of water may be necessary during this planning period.

- Water supply infrastructure should be upgraded and a new storage tank and well will be necessary to accommodate future growth.
- A large number of households in the City use private septic systems. Working with Springfield to expand wastewater collection and treatment capacity and upgrade the lift stations in order to accommodate the residential growth should be a high priority of the City.
- Improvements in Fire Protection services will need to be made over the life of the plan, including a one Pumper and Rescue truck. Additional stations may be necessary to maintain or improve the current Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating.
- While Guyton maintains a ratio above the Nation Recreation and Parks Association recommended ratio of recreational space to residents, there is a community desire to increase the amount of recreation opportunities offered in the City.
- Guyton faced a greater future demand for solid waste capacity due to residential growth. Therefore, it is important that City officials monitor waste management issues and address them as needed.
- The three miles of road are covered in ash product in the City. Due to the maintenance difficulties the ash paving has presented, the City should consider paving the streets with asphalt, as appropriate.
- As the City continues to gain population, and commercial development spreads along the main highways, the intersection of Highways 17 and 119 will require signalization. A turn lane may be required at the intersection of Highway 17 and Gracen Road, as new residential developments on Gracen Road cause additional traffic.

Housing

- Based on building permit data, the amount of housing stock in Guyton increased by 51 percent from 2000 to 2005. However, according to the projections in the Georgia Tech population study, over this same five-year period, the population has increased by 86 percent.
- The median property value in the City of Guyton increased by 87 percent from 1990 to 2000 to nearly \$80,000. Single family homes remain the most prevalent type of housing in Guyton, but the City has experienced a 34 percent increase in mobile homes from 1990 to 2000. During this same time, the number of multi-family housing units has become negligible. These factors combined indicate that residents are relying on mobile homes as an affordable alternative to site built homes.
- The majority of the housing stock in Guyton was built prior to 1940 which presents a concern for an increase in the number of dilapidated housing structures within the City.
- Guyton has more homes than jobs which is consistent with the perception of the County serving as a bedroom community for the greater Savannah area. This imbalance creates

longer commute times, traffic congestion, and can force residents to relocate closer to jobs.

Transportation Systems

- Major corridors into the City of Guyton suffer from congestion, clutter, signage, and sprawl.
- Trucks traveling through the City of Guyton use Georgia Highway 17 and Georgia Highway 119. As a result of the industrial and warehousing facility proposed by the Effingham County Industrial Development Authority, the road system will need to be prepared to handle the increased volume of heavy truck traffic.
- Streets and new developments in the City of Guyton are not connected to, or compatible with, those in neighboring areas. The community lacks a local trail network and connectivity with neighboring communities, the region, and the state. Both of these issues indicate inefficient development patterns within the City.
- The Pilgrim Walking Trail Rail lies within the City of Guyton. There is a desire to connect this trail to the City of Guyton's Rails to Trails Transportation Enhancement project with GDOT. The Rails to Trails project is on the remains of the Central of Georgia railway and connects to Guyton Elementary School. The rail trail extends beyond the bounds of this project presenting the City with the opportunity to further extend the trail.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- The City of Guyton should be aware that they are a part of the Regional Comprehensive Plan and related Short Term Work Program. The City should also be aware of the impact they will have on their respective communities.
- Increased collaboration and partnership between the County and the Cities of Rincon and Springfield is strongly encouraged in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of both long term planning and service delivery.
- The local governments in Effingham County should value each community's uniqueness, while embracing their interdependence. The local governments need to be aware that all governments are affected by the decisions of all individual governing bodies.
- The City should actively participate in the County-wide "Eggs and Issues" style meetings to increase the communication between the County and the Cities of Guyton, Rincon, and Springfield.

II. Compliance with Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria

The City of Guyton has not implemented environmental regulations for the protection of Wetlands consistent with DNR's Rules for Environmental Planning

III. Analysis of Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy

The City of Guyton is currently working on fire and water service delivery areas with the County and other cities.

I. Analysis

Population

- The projected population increase of the City of Rincon will cause increased strain on the provision of water due to a cap on the City’s water withdrawal permits and wastewater treatment capacity.
- Age projections show all age groups increasing in a uniform manner, showing that Rincon is likely to remain a “bedroom community” to Savannah, and attract young professionals with children as well as “empty nesters” and individuals at or beyond retirement age.
- The increase in the County’s Hispanic population will increase the need for Spanish-language services and support. By 2030, it is projected that Hispanics will make up nearly 4 percent of Rincon’s population.
- Rincon’s per capita income was the highest of all three municipalities in Effingham County in 2000 at \$22,023 and the lowest poverty rate at 9 percent. The median income has increased dramatically to lie between \$40,000 and \$49,999. Future projections show these trends continuing. However, the demand for affordable housing and other services will remain.

Economic Development

- As the largest incorporated city in the County, Rincon serves as the retail center of Effingham County.
- Beginning in the early 1980s, the City of Rincon has felt the impacts of growth from Savannah. In recent years, this growth has been restricted by the water and sewer limitations and could stunt future growth if the issues are not resolved.
- All sectors of the economy have been increasing in Rincon with the Manufacturing; Educational, health, and social services; Retail trade; and Transportation, warehousing, and utilities sectors being the largest employers of the City. The Transportation, warehousing, and utilities industry serves as a Base economy for the City.
- The median income for the residents of Rincon is \$40,903 which is the highest of the three municipalities in Effingham County and close to the median incomes of the State and Nation.
- Only 30 percent of the labor force residing in Rincon worked in Effingham County. Much less, only 18 percent of the labor force residing in Rincon worked within the City. The average travel time of a commuter living in Rincon is 28 minutes. Nearly 50 percent of the labor force travels to work between six o’clock AM and eight o’clock AM putting a large strain on the transportation system during these hours. With Rincon’s relatively

short distance from Savannah and easy access to I-95, many commuters are likely traveling into Chatham County and Savannah for employment which places a burden on State Route 21.

- The City's growth has strained the existing transportation network. Potential solutions include a bypass and more connections to Fort Howard Road.
- According to the 2000 Census, nearly 70 percent of the adult population over the age of 25 was a high school graduate. This is the highest percentage of all three incorporated areas in Effingham County.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- The City of Rincon has a water supply watershed, groundwater recharge areas and wetlands within its jurisdictional boundaries. Protection of these vital natural resources can be accomplished by adopting, implementing and enforcing ordinances consistent with the DNR's Rules for Environmental Planning.
- The City does not have a historic preservation ordinance which would provide a layer of protection from incompatible development that deteriorates the remaining historic resources of the original small railroad town.
- There are eligible properties in Rincon that should be nominated for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places.
- Consensus building activities supporting preservation should be implemented through educational programs for the public about the necessity for preservation in partnership with the Georgia Salzburger Society.
- The Historic Effingham-Ebenezer Scenic Byway was accepted into the State DOT program in October 2006. Drafting a corridor management plan and notifying property owners is the next step in the designation process.

Community Facilities and Services

- The City of Rincon is currently experiencing rapid growth in population and has increased its boundaries. The increase in population size and service delivery area will proportionately increase the request for services, which will put a strain on existing systems and challenge City leaders to meet the demand for services. The City's administrative staffing level will need to be increased, especially in Planning, Building, and Zoning.
- Current water usage and permitted withdrawals in Rincon are not sustainable, and must be addressed to ensure water supply for the life of the comprehensive plan. The City has struggled to meet strict requirements on water conservation and supply, while bound to a water withdrawal cap that has not kept pace with residential growth. To address this, the

City has plans for new main line extensions, and will purchase water from the Effingham County water system to serve new growth.

- The City's wastewater treatment plant's capacity is higher than the currently daily treatment demand. However, the daily demand is higher than the current permitted treatment capacity. Therefore, an increase in the City's permitted treatment capacity is a high priority to meet the needs of ongoing development in Rincon.
- Fire protection services for Rincon are adequate. Over the life of the comprehensive plan, one Pumper and two Tankers will need to be replaced. As the City increases in population and service delivery area, the need for additional stations, equipment, and fire infrastructure has to be addressed to maintain or improve the Insurance Service Organization (ISO) rating.
- Rincon's City Park inventory maintains a level of park space below the National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA) national standard of 5 acres per 1,000 persons. In addition to more park space, future needs will include a gymnasium, soccer and football field, as well as an increase in staffing.
- As the City continues to gain population and commercial development spreads along the main highways, the intersection of Highway 21 and 9th Street will require signalization and turn lane improvements. In addition, the intersection of Highway 21 and Towne Park will require new signalization.
- New branches of the Live Oak Public Library System (LOPLS) will need to be added as the population in the City and County increase.

Housing

- Single family homes have decreased as a percentage of the City's total housing stock as more housing options enter the market, but continue to make up the largest share of the total housing units in Rincon. Multi-family housing has increased by 24 percent from 1980 to 2000 to make up 27 percent of the City's housing stock. At this same time, mobile homes and trailers have decreased slightly to make up 15 percent of the City's housing stock. This data suggest that residents are relying more and more on multifamily or apartment units as an affordable housing option.
- The housing stock in Rincon is relatively new and of good condition with 48 percent of housing units being built in 1970 or later, and nearly 100 percent of housing units having both complete plumbing and kitchen facilities. Also, less than 10 percent of the housing stock in the City was vacant in 2000.
- Median values of owner-occupied housing and monthly rent have both increased from 1990 to 2000. Median property values have increased by 70 percent to be \$93,000, the highest of the cities in Effingham County. Median rent has increased by 13 percent to be \$502, the lowest of the cities in the County. During this same time, cost burdened

households have increased only slightly to be 16 percent in 2000. Historically, Rincon has had the lowest percentage of cost burdened households than Guyton and Springfield.

- Rincon has more homes than jobs which is consistent with the perception of the County serving as a bedroom community for the greater Savannah area. This imbalance creates longer commute times, traffic congestion, and can force residents to relocate closer to jobs.

Transportation Systems

- Traffic congestion has become a problem within the City of Rincon. The Rincon Bypass should help to eliminate some of the traffic flowing through the City, but there are few alternatives to automobile transportation within the City to help ease the congestion on the road network.
- The City is neither a pedestrian nor bicycle friendly environment. Sidewalks, bike trails, and safety features are insufficient. Streetscape improvements should incorporate these alternative modes of transportation.
- Trucks traveling through the City of Rincon use Georgia Highway 21. As a result of the industrial and warehousing facility proposed by the Effingham County Industrial Development Authority, the road system will need to be improved to handle the increased volume of heavy truck traffic. Upgrades should include the Rincon Bypass.
- Commute times and distances have increased in the City of Rincon. More people are driving longer distances to reach home, school, shopping, or work. These issues indicate inefficient development patterns within the City.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- The City of Rincon should be aware that they are a part of the Regional Comprehensive Plan and related Short Term Work Program. The City should also be aware of the impact they will have on their respective communities.
- Increased collaboration and partnership between the County and the Cities of Guyton and Springfield is strongly encouraged in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of both long term planning and service delivery.
- The local governments in Effingham County should value each community's uniqueness, while embracing their interdependence. The local governments need to be aware that all governments are affected by the decisions of all individual governing bodies.
- The City should actively participate in the County-wide "Eggs and Issues" style meetings to increase the communication between the County and the Cities of Guyton, Rincon, and Springfield.

II. Compliance with Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria

The City of Rincon has implemented environmental regulations for the protection of Wetlands, Groundwater Recharge Areas or Water Supply Watersheds consistent with DNR's Rules for Environmental Planning (Part V environmental ordinances).

III. Analysis of Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy

The City of Rincon is not a signatory to the Service Delivery Strategy. However, the City is currently working on fire and water service delivery areas with the County and other cities.

I. Analysis

Population

- The projected population increase of the City of Springfield will cause increased strain on administrative staff and infrastructure particularly water supply and delivery systems, as well as wastewater discharge limits and collection systems.
- The relative aging of the population in Springfield will increase the demand for health services and diversified recreational and cultural opportunities that are suited to the needs of citizens aged 55 years and older.
- The increase in Springfield's Hispanic population will increase the need for Spanish-language services and support. By 2030, it is projected that Hispanics will make up 3 percent of the City's population.
- Springfield's per capita income is the median of all three municipalities in Effingham County in 2000 at \$16,519 and the median poverty rate at 13 percent. The median income in the City increased to be between \$35,000 and \$39,999. While these trends are positive for the City, the demand for affordable housing will remain relatively high in the City.

Economic Development

- As a DCA designated Better Hometown, the City of Springfield is focusing its efforts on rejuvenating the hometown feel of local businesses, homes, and services.
- The Manufacturing; Education, health, and social service; Retail Trade; and Public Administration industries make up more than 60 percent of the City's total economy. Manufacturing has been identified as a Base industry for Springfield. In addition, the City should encourage the Retail Trade, Construction, and Transportation sectors.
- The median income for residents in the City of Springfield is \$36,554 which is below National, State, and County median incomes. Over 50 percent of the population is not in the labor force. This is the highest percentage of all three municipalities in Effingham County. As a percentage of the City's total personal income, retirement income, other income, income from public assistance, and social security income has increased from 1990 indicating an increase in the retirement population within the City.
- Forty-two percent of Springfield's labor force works in Effingham County, while only 17 percent work within the City. The mean travel time to work was 32 minutes, the highest average commute time in Effingham County, and nearly 60 percent of the labor force traveling to work between six o'clock AM and eight o'clock AM. These factors combined place a strain on the transportation system.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- The City of Springfield has groundwater recharge areas and wetlands within its jurisdictional boundaries. The City has adopted, implemented and is enforcing the appropriate regulations consistent with the DNR's Rules for Environmental Planning.
- The City does not have a historic preservation ordinance which would provide a layer of protection from incompatible development that compromises the historic resources of the County seat.
- There are eligible properties in Springfield that should be nominated for inclusion to the National Register of Historic Places.
- Consensus building activities supporting preservation should be implemented through educational programs for the public about the necessity for preservation in partnership with the three preservation organizations within the County.
- The Historic Effingham-Ebenezer Scenic Byway was accepted into the State DOT program in October 2006. Drafting a corridor management plan and notifying property owners is the next step in the designation process.

Community Facilities and Services

- The City of Springfield is currently experiencing rapid growth in population and has increased its boundaries. The increase in population size and service delivery area will proportionately increase the request for services, which will put a strain on existing systems and challenge City leaders to meet the demand for services.
- The City's water withdrawal cap severely limits the City's options with regard to the City system, and it may be necessary to seek alternative sources of water. In addition, the City system's water supply infrastructure is in need of upgrading.
- While the capacity of the City's wastewater treatment facility is undergoing a capacity upgrade, wastewater discharge limits will hinder the system's ability to serve future customers. In addition, upgrades to the City's current collection system's line network are a high priority, as the terracotta lines are beginning to fail.
- Fire protection staffing is adequate to accommodate the growth being experienced by the City, however, a Tanker/Service/Ladder vehicle and one Pumper will need to be replaced during the comprehensive plan period. Also, the department has already outgrown the existing station and is in need of new facilities. As the City increases in population and service delivery area, the need for additional stations, equipment, and fire infrastructure should be addressed to maintain or improve the current Insurance Service Organization rating.
- Springfield's City Park inventory maintains a level of park space below the National Recreation and Parks Association's (NRPA) national standard of 5 acres per 1,000

persons. In addition to more park space, future needs will include playground equipment, fencing, picnic shelters, and a pavilion, as well as an increase in staffing.

- While the City has adequate stormwater lines for current development levels, the stormwater lines are in need of upgrading and some pipes will need to be upsized. In addition, constant maintenance is required to combat roof infiltration.
- The continued truck traffic through downtown Springfield, despite the construction of the Highway 21 Bypass, may hinder the City's attempts at beautification and downtown streetscaping. The City should seek to mitigate this situation in order to limit the truck traffic through the downtown area.

Housing

- Based on building permit data, the amount of housing stock in Springfield increased by 19 percent from 2000 to 2005. However, according to the projections in the Georgia Tech population study, over this same five-year period, the population has increased by 25 percent.
- Single family homes have decreased as a percentage of the City's total housing stock as more housing options enter the market but continues to make up the largest share of the total housing units in Springfield. Multi-family housing has increased by 14 percent from 1980 to 2000 to make up 25 percent of the City's housing stock. At this same time, mobile homes and trailers have increased slightly to make up 4 percent of the City's housing stock. This data suggest that residents are relying more and more on multifamily or apartment units as an affordable housing option.
- The housing stock in Springfield is beginning to age with a majority of housing units being built from 1960 to 1979. However, 100 percent of housing units have both complete plumbing and kitchen facilities. Approximately 17 percent of the housing stock in the City was vacant for one reason or another in 2000.
- Median values of owner-occupied housing and monthly rent in Springfield have both increased from 1990 to 2000. Median property values have increased by 26 percent to be \$79,400. This is the lowest percentage increase of the cities in Effingham County. Median rent has increased by 48 percent to be \$508. This is the highest percentage increase of the cities in Effingham County. During this same time, cost burdened households have increased only slightly to be approximately 20 percent in 2000.
- Springfield has more homes than jobs which is consistent with the perception of the County serving as a bedroom community for the greater Savannah area. This imbalance creates longer commute times, traffic congestion, and can force residents to relocate closer to jobs.

Transportation Systems

- Trucks traveling through the City of Springfield use Georgia Highway 119 and the Georgia Highway 21 Bypass. However, there are issues with trucks getting onto the bypass just north of the City due to a difficult, sharp turn required to get on the Bypass and a low overpass on the connecting road. Therefore, many trucks are using Highway 21 which runs through the downtown area which is creating a traffic problem.
- Streets in new developments in the City of Springfield are not connected to, or compatible with, those in neighboring areas. Also, local trails are not linked with those of neighboring communities, the region and the state. These issues indicate inefficient development patterns within the City.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- The City of Springfield should be aware that they are a part of the Regional Comprehensive Plan and related Short Term Work Program. The City should also be aware of the impact they will have on their respective communities.
- Increased collaboration and partnership between the County and the Cities of Guyton and Rincon is strongly encouraged in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of both long term planning and service delivery.
- The local governments in Effingham County should value each community's uniqueness, while embracing their interdependence. The local governments need to be aware that all governments are affected by the decisions of all individual governing bodies.
- The City should actively participate in the County-wide "Eggs and Issues" style meetings to increase the communication between the County and the Cities of Guyton, Rincon, and Springfield.

II. Compliance with Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria

The City of Springfield has implemented environmental regulations for the protection of Wetlands and Groundwater Recharge Areas consistent with DNR's Rules for Environmental Planning.

III. Analysis of Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy

The City of Springfield is currently working on fire and water service delivery areas with the County and other cities.