

Effingham County and the Cities of Guyton, Rincon, and Springfield Public Participation Program

The Effingham County Joint Comprehensive Plan is intended to reflect the goals, values, and vision of the community as a whole. In order to achieve this, it is critical for the public to be involved in the creation of the plan and to have a sense of ownership and pride in their local community plan. Elected officials typically change over the life of a comprehensive plan, so engaging the public to champion the plan can help ensure that it remains at the forefront of the decision-making process.

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 the County and the cities to maintain Qualified Local Government (QLG) status, which bestows eligibility for state grants, loans and permits.

The joint Comprehensive Plan for Effingham County and the cities of Rincon, Springfield and Guyton will be prepared according to the Advanced Planning Level Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, or “Local Planning Requirements” (effective May 1, 2005). Due to changes made by DCA for the recertification schedule for Effingham County’s comprehensive plan, a partial plan update will be submitted in mid-2007 and a full update will be submitted later in the year.

IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

Effingham County

The Effingham County Board of Commissioners appointed two committees to oversee the Comprehensive Planning Process. Each of these committees includes representatives from a diverse cross-section of stakeholders in the county.

Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is comprised of individuals who will be instrumental in the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. This includes elected and appointed officials and executives from community organizations, such as the United Way, Ebenezer Retreat, and the Hospital Authority. Citizens are also a very important component of the Steering Committee, as they will provide critical input during the process and ideally, continue to champion the plan as the county continues to grow. Committee members are listed in the table below.

<i>Effingham County Steering Committee</i>
Mark Bryant – Realtor
Ron Corzine – Savannah Electric
Irma Davis – Citizen
Kim Dennis – YMCA Director
Bonnie Dixon –United Way
Robert Drewry – Citizen
Beth Epling – Ebenezer Retreat

Brent Howell – GA Pacific
Helen Kirkland – Homeowner Assoc.
Ruth Lee – Veteran’s Park
Myra Lewis – Effingham Co. Commission
Michelle Liotta – Environmentalist
Reginald Loper – Effingham Co. Commission
Monica Mastrianni –Architect
Jimmy McDuffie – Sheriff
Norma Jean Morgan – Hospital
Verna Phillips – Effingham Co. Chairwoman
F. Parker Rahn – Developer
Hubert Sapp – Effingham Co. Commission
Rick Sebastian – Pastor
Randy Shearouse – School Superintendent
Jerry Smith – Rotary/Lions Club
Jeffery Utley – Effingham Co. Commission
Tre’ Wilkins – EMC

A draft of the community vision statement will be developed during meetings with the Steering Committee. The proposed vision statement will then be shared through the public participation process for review.

The Steering Committee process will consist of five meetings to address the development of the Community Agenda. Specific issues to be addressed include:

- Recommended Issues and Opportunities
- Partial Update: STWP & Policies
- Vision & Character Areas
- Future Land Use
- Implementation Strategies

Additional meetings may be held, if needed. Some meetings may also be joint meetings with the Technical Committee.

Technical Committee

To coordinate the County’s internal efforts during development of the Community Assessment, Community Participation Program, and Community Agenda, the County convened a Technical Committee. This committee is comprised of representatives from the Planning Commission, County administration, zoning and GIS, and other County staff. Additional members include staff from the Effingham Economic Development Authority, Effingham County Schools, the library, and Chamber of Commerce representative. This approach ensures that the background and community knowledge of County and quasi-governmental staff is incorporated into the plan.

This Committee provides input and feedback on the establishment of the Community Character Areas and Areas Requiring Special Attention, the selection of Issues and Opportunities, and the analysis of the Quality Community Objectives. The Committee also assists with development of

the Public Participation strategies and the future vision, development map, short-term work program, and land use policies. Committee members are listed in the table below.

<i>Effingham County Technical Committee</i>
Val Ashcraft – Public Safety Director
Kresha Aycock – GIS Project Manager
Janis Bevill – Chief Tax Assessor
Rebecca Boston – DEFACS Director
Michele Canon - CGRDC
Jack Carter - Gateway
David Crawley – Zoning Administrator
Joanna Floyd – Finance Director
Slade Helmly – Board of Education
John Henry – Effingham Co. EDA
Larry Keith – OMI
Robert Leach – Library Director
Clarence Morgan – Recreation Director
Darrell O’Neal – Environmental Health
George Shaw – Senior Planner
Rick Shores – Director of Medstar One
Elaine Spencer – Family Connection
Bill Tyson – Extension Service
Jeffery Wilkes – Planning Board
Ed Williams – County Administrator
Mike Wirth – Code Enforcement

City of Guyton

The Planning Board was named as the coordinating body, or committee, for Guyton’s planning process. The purpose of the Committee is to lead the planning process, provide guidance to Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center staff, and enlist the community-wide support that will be necessary to develop and sustain this planning effort. The Committee will continue to meet as often as necessary to monitor the progress of plan development. Committee members are listed in the table below.

<i>Guyton Planning Board and Comprehensive Plan Committee</i>
Marshall Reiser, Planning Board Chairman
Richard Duncan, Planning Board
Fred Doberson, Planning Board
Diane Hicklen, Planning Board
Franklin Goldwire, Planning Board

While not formal members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, the elected officials of Guyton have attended committee meetings and have provided assistance and information. City Council will be a vital component of the planning process and Agenda development. City Council includes the following members:

<i>Guyton City Council</i>
Mayor Michael Garvin
Jeff Lariscy
Brenda Lovett
Phillip King
Wilton L. Pevey

Guyton Stakeholders

The Guyton Planning Board and Comprehensive Plan Committee reviewed DCA's suggested stakeholders and developed a localized list that both reflects the community's character and meets the community's need to have a diverse base of participation.

Economic Development: Representatives of Local Businesses / Industries

- Effingham County Chamber: Janis Z. Bevill, President
- Chamber of Commerce, Director of Marketing and Events: Linda McDaniel
- Southern Homes & Land
- Covenant Advantage Realty: Amy Kuharik
- Agricultural and forestry interests: Cooperative Extension & Farm Bureau
- Georgia Forestry Commission: Vance Bevill, Chief Ranger
- Homebuilders Assoc. of Greater Savannah: Effingham Co. Branch; Mark Bryant
- Thomson's IGA
- Carmen Cribbs/Charles Patterson
- Parker's Market: Greg Parker
- Anthony Alfonso (former council member)
- Linda's Country Store; Mac's: Linda Edwards
- Claudette's Country Kitchen: Claudette Rahn
- Gregory's Floral Shop: Gregory Helmuth (former council member)
- Roscoe's: Roscoe Collins
- Pat McCall

Cultural Resources: Civic Organizations & Social Services

- Family Connection Collaborative: Elaine Spencer
- Rincon representative to Historical Preservation Advisory Council: Tom Grier
- Habitat for Humanity: George Groce
- United Way of the Coastal Empire
- Department of Family and Children Services
- Effingham Victim Witness
- Gateway Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Center
- Manna House Thrift Store and Food Bank

- Churches (including: United Methodist; Pine Street Baptist; New Providence Baptist; Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Liberty Christian; First Union; Macedonia Baptist; Royal Temple Holiness)
- American Legion, Effingham County
- American Legion Auxiliary
- Exchange Club
- Effingham Historic Society: Pearl Boynes and Lawton Nease, Jr.
- NAACP: Lucy Powell
- Lewis Beacham (elementary school principal)
- Guyton Women’s Club: Claudette Griffin

Natural Resources and Land Use, Transportation & Community Facilities

- City Clerk and Public Works Superintendent
- County Solid Waste Coordinator: Connie Burns
- Regional office of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division
- Georgia Land Trust

Intergovernmental Coordination and Public Outreach

- Mayor and City Council
- Local/regional news media Savannah Morning News; Spirit; Effingham Herald
- Effingham Health Department
- City’s Chief of Police, Fire Chief & County EMA Director
- Guyton representative to the School Board
- Guyton representative to the Industrial Development Authority
- Guyton representative to the Hospital Authority

City of Rincon

The City of Rincon has named a committee comprised of residents and business owners, and has encouraged staff to participate and share information as needed.

The purpose of the Committee is to lead the planning process, provide guidance to Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center (CGRDC) staff and to enlist the community-wide support that will be necessary to develop and sustain this planning effort. Committee members are listed in the table below.

<i>Rincon Comprehensive Plan Committee</i>
Toss Allen
Susie Davis
Sally Foreman
LaMeisha Hunter
Scott Morgan (Council liaison)
Maxine Wendelken

While not formal members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, elected officials of Rincon initially met with CGRDC staff and led a tour of the City. City Council will continue to be a vital component of the planning process and Agenda development. City Council includes the following members:

<i>Rincon City Council</i>
Mayor Ken Lee
Lamar Crosby
Ken Baxley
Scott Morgan
Levi Scott, Jr.
Paul Wendelken
Reese Browher

Rincon Stakeholders

The Rincon Committee reviewed DCA's suggested stakeholders and developed a localized list that both reflects the community's character and meets the community's need to have a diverse base of participation.

Economic Development: Representatives of Local Businesses/Industries

- Effingham County Chamber: Janis Z. Bevill, President
- Chamber of Commerce, Director of Marketing and Events: Linda McDaniel
- Real estate professionals: Southern Homes & Land
- Agricultural and forestry interests: Cooperative Extension & Farm Bureau
- Georgia Forestry Commission: Vance Bevill, Chief Ranger
- Homebuilders Association of Greater Savannah: Effingham County Branch

Cultural Resources: Civic Organizations & Social Services

- Family Connection Collaborative: Elaine Spencer
- Rincon representative to the Historical Preservation Advisory Council: Tom Grier
- Habitat for Humanity: George Groce
- United Way of the Coastal Empire
- Department of Family and Children Services
- Effingham Victim Witness
- Gateway Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Center
- Manna House Thrift Store and Food Bank
- Churches, ecumenical councils
- American Legion, Effingham County
- American Legion Auxiliary
- Exchange Club
- Historic Effingham Society
- Rincon Lions Club
- Rincon Noon Lions Club

- Rotary Club of Effingham County
- Rotary Club of Effingham Sunrise

Natural Resources and Land Use, Transportation & Community Facilities

- Planning commission, City Clerk and Public Works Director
- County Solid Waste Coordinator: Connie Burns
- Regional office of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division
- Georgia Land Trust

Intergovernmental Coordination and Public Outreach

- Mayor and City Council; Planning & Zoning Board
- Local/regional news media Savannah Morning News; Spirit; Effingham Herald
- Effingham Health Department
- City’s Chief of Police, Fire Chief & County EMA Director
- Rincon representative to the School Board
- Rincon representative to the Industrial Development Authority
- Rincon representative to the Hospital Authority

City of Springfield

City Council formed a subcommittee to coordinate the City’s planning process. The purpose of the Committee is to lead the planning process, provide guidance to CGRDC staff and enlist the community-wide support that will be necessary to develop and sustain this planning effort. The Committee will meet as necessary to monitor the progress of plan development. Committee members are listed in the table below.

<i>Springfield Comprehensive Plan Committee</i>
Mayor Barton Alderman
Dennis Webb
Ron Boatright

While not formal members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee, City staff such as Cathy Rushing, Clerk; Lowell Morgan, Public Works Director, and Police Chief Paul Wynn have all provided valuable input, assistance and information. City Council will be a vital component of the planning process and Agenda development. City Council includes the following members:

<i>Springfield City Council</i>
Mayor Barton Alderman
Dennis Webb
Ron Boatright
Charles Hinely
Max Neidlinger
Kenny Usher
Butch Kieffer

Springfield Stakeholders

The Springfield Committee and staff reviewed DCA's suggested stakeholders and developed a localized list that both reflects the community's character and meets the community's need to have a diverse base of participation.

Economic Development: Representatives of Local Businesses / Industries

- Effingham County Chamber: Janis Z. Bevill, President
- Chamber of Commerce, Director of Marketing and Events: Linda McDaniel
- Real estate professionals: Southern Homes & Land
- Agricultural and forestry interests: Cooperative Extension & Farm Bureau
- Georgia Forestry Commission: Vance Bevill, Chief Ranger
- Homebuilders Association of Greater Savannah: Effingham County Branch
- Springfield Revitalization Corporation
- Cultural Resources: Civic Organizations & Social Services
- Family Connection Collaborative: Elaine Spencer
- Habitat for Humanity: George Groce
- United Way of the Coastal Empire
- Department of Family and Children Services
- Effingham Victim Witness
- Gateway Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Center
- Churches
- American Legion, Effingham County
- American Legion Auxiliary
- Exchange Club

Natural Resources and Land Use, Transportation & Community Facilities

- City Clerk: Cathy Rushing
- Public Works Director: Lowell Morgan
- County Solid Waste Coordinator: Connie Burns
- Regional office of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division
- Georgia Land Trust

Intergovernmental Coordination and Public Outreach

- Mayor and City Council
- Local/regional news media Savannah Morning News; Spirit; Effingham Herald
- Effingham Health Department
- City's Chief of Police, Fire Chief & County EMA Director
- Springfield representative to the School Board
- Springfield representative to the Industrial Development Authority
- Springfield representative to the Hospital Authority

IDENTIFICATION OF PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

Public Workshops

A series of three community workshops are planned throughout the process to receive input and feedback throughout the development of the plan. The workshops are anticipated to focus on the following topics.

Workshop No. 1 – Identification of Community Issues and Opportunities (Held August 17, 2006)

This workshop will provide an overview of the state planning goals and provide an opportunity for participants to break into smaller working groups to discuss issues and opportunities for Effingham County and the three cities to address these goals. This hands-on approach provides a sense of ownership and engages meeting participants. Ideas developed during this meeting will then be presented to the group as a whole.

Workshop No. 2 – Vision & Future Land Use

Workshop No. 2 builds on the results from the Steering Committees and encourages participants to carefully examine development patterns and thoughtfully describe their preferred future.

Workshop No. 3 – Implementation & Introducing the Community Agenda

The third workshop will present the Community Agenda, particularly implementation measures, to the public. Workshop participants will then have the opportunity to discuss the recommendations in more detail with project team members in an open-house format. Participants will be encouraged to submit any comments and suggestions.

Surveys

Community surveys provide an opportunity to reach a wide segment of the population for general information. While surveys can be limited in the amount of detail provided, they can be a very useful tool for getting a general sense of what is important to residents. A number of surveys have been conducted in Effingham County over the past several years. These surveys will be reviewed for any trends or issues that are readily identifiable. In addition, the County will conduct a survey very early to begin the planning process. This survey was distributed through the quarterly County newsletter in August 2006, and was mailed to every taxpayer in the County. It was also available through the County website, and at County offices.

Project Website

The County will have a section of its website dedicated to the comprehensive planning process. This is an effective tool to readily provide information to the stakeholders and citizens and a very cost effective way to provide draft documents for feedback and review.

Community Meetings

The County will attend or host community meetings throughout the planning process as necessary. These meetings will typically be smaller, more intimate meetings for civic groups, neighborhood organizations, or sub-committees that may form throughout the process. The number or timing of these locations has not yet been determined, as it is anticipated that these will be held on an as-needed basis.

