

EFFINGHAM
2050 ✨
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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ORDINANCE

Ordinance No. 016-2026

An Ordinance Adopting the Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan

WHEREAS, the City of Effingham has heretofore adopted a Comprehensive Plan by Resolution No. 14 passed May 2, 1961; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Effingham has heretofore adopted a Comprehensive Plan by Ordinance 2-74 passed February 19, 1974, and revisions thereto by Ordinance 21-78 passed May 16, 1978, and Ordinance 55-78 passed November 21, 1978; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Effingham has heretofore adopted a Comprehensive Plan by Ordinance 26-84 passed July 17, 1984, and revisions thereto by Ordinance 24-86 passed June 3, 1986; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Effingham has heretofore adopted a Comprehensive Plan by Ordinance 16-95 passed February 23, 1995 and revisions thereto by Ordinance 38-2000 passed June 20, 2000, Ordinance 59-2000 passed August 15, 2000, Ordinance 2-2006 passed February 21, 2006, Ordinance 13-2011 passed February 15, 2011, Ordinance 31-2014 passed May 22, 2014, Ordinance 85-2017 passed September 5, 2017, Ordinance No. 024-2020 passed April 7, 2020, and Ordinance 050-2021 passed September 21, 2021; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Effingham has heretofore created and utilized a Plan Commission since passage of Ordinance 82 in 1944 for the preparation of a comprehensive plan along with guidance and recommendations for the direction and control of the growth and development in the City of Effingham; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Effingham has heretofore directed the Plan Commission to proceed with a comprehensive review of the current Comprehensive Plan along with consideration and study of, but not limited to existing conditions, recent development trends, housing conditions, type, quantity and needs and transportation type and needs to develop a new Comprehensive Plan to provide guidance and recommendation of actions and policies for the next 25 years of growth for the City of Effingham and surrounding areas; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Effingham has created and appointed members to a Comprehensive Plan Stakeholders/Steering Committee to assist the Plan Commission; and,

WHEREAS, the City of Effingham accepted a proposal and entered into a contract with Chastain and Associates LLC with Sightline Planning and Zoning providing certain services to assist in preparation of a new comprehensive plan pursuant to Resolution No. 087-2024 dated July 16, 2024; and,

WHEREAS, a draft of the Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan was posted on January 12, 2026, and later presented to the City Council, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Stakeholders/Steering Committee and the public at a Special Meeting / Workshop on January 22, 2026; and,

WHEREAS, the Plan Commission held a public hearing for the Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan on February 10, 2026, at 6:00 o'clock P.M., after required legal notice being given to hear and address any and all testimony, comments and questions from the public; and,

WHEREAS, the Plan Commission has submitted to the City Council a Letter of Recommendation with the recommendation the City Council adopt the Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan subject to adding "a clarification of actions to take for housing."; and,

WHEREAS, City staff and Chastain and Associates LLC have provided "a clarification of actions to take for housing." as recommended by the Plan Commission for consideration by the City Council; and,

WHEREAS, the City Council, after careful consideration, is of the opinion the Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan, as submitted and attached hereto with revisions to provide "a clarification of actions to take for housing", should be adopted and finds that it is necessary and urgent for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety, property and property values, the Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan shall take effect immediately, all as provided for herein.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EFFINGHAM, EFFINGHAM COUNTY, STATE OF ILLINOIS, THAT:

SECTION I: The findings made in the prefatory portion of this Ordinance are hereby adopted.

SECTION II: The Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan, as prepared for the City of Effingham, Illinois, by the Stakeholders/Steering Committee, the City Plan Commission, City staff and Chastain and Associates LLC with Sightline Planning and Zoning providing certain services dated February 19, 2026, be and the same is hereby adopted by the City of Effingham as a comprehensive plan of development, which said plan is from this time forward to be known as "Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan of the City of Effingham, Illinois"; and that all future developments of the area as noted by this Plan shall be in compliance with the general requirements as therein set forth.

SECTION III: The Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan of the City of Effingham, Illinois, dated February 19, 2026, with the Appendices listed in Chapter 6 are hereby incorporated into this Ordinance by this reference.

SECTION IV: The Comprehensive Plan adopted by Ordinance 16-95 passed February 23, 1995 and revisions thereto by Ordinance 38-2000 passed June 20, 2000, Ordinance 59-2000 passed August 15, 2000, Ordinance 2-2006 passed February 21, 2006, Ordinance 13-2011 passed February 15, 2011, Ordinance 31-2014 passed May 22, 2014, Ordinance 85-2017 passed September 5, 2017, Ordinance No. 024-2020 passed April 7, 2020, and Ordinance 050-2021 passed September 21, 2021 of the City of Effingham, shall be and the same are hereby repealed and shall become null and void upon the taking of effect of this Ordinance.

SECTION V: SEPARABILITY: It is the intention of the City Council of the City of Effingham that this Ordinance and every provision thereof shall be considered separable; and should any section, clause, provision, or part or portion of any section, clause, provision of this Ordinance be declared to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the Ordinance as a whole or any part thereof, other than the part so declared to be invalid.

SECTION VI: PUBLIC INSPECTION: A copy of the Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan with Appendices listed in Chapter 6 shall be filed with the City Clerk and shall be available at all times during business hours for public inspection. Printed copies of the Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan with Appendices listed in Chapter 6 shall be made available for \$50 to defray the cost of printing.

SECTION VII: FILING NOTICE: The City Clerk is hereby directed to file a Notice of Adoption of the Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan with the Effingham County Clerk.

SECTION VIII: EFFECTIVE DATE: This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after the expiration of 10 days after the date of filing the Notice of Adoption of the Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan with the Effingham County Clerk.

Placed on file this 26th day of February, 2026.

Presented, passed and approved this 18th day of March, 2026.

Filed with the City Clerk this 18th day of March, 2026.

Notice of Adoption filed with the Effingham County Clerk this 20th day of March, 2026.

Published in pamphlet form this 20th day of March, 2026.

Mayor Schutzbach: Absent
Commissioner Micenheimer: Yea
Commissioner Moeller: Yea
Commissioner Stephens: Yea
Commissioner Niebrugge: Absent

YEAS: 3
NAYS: 0
ABSENT: 2

CITY OF EFFINGHAM, ILLINOIS

/s/ Larry Micenheimer
Larry Micenheimer, Mayor Pro Tem

ATTEST:

/s/ Abbey Nosbisch
Abbey Nosbisch, City Clerk

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INTRODUCTION

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Mike Schutzbach
Commissioner Larry Micenheimer
Commissioner Jake Niebrugge
Commissioner Libby Moeller
Commissioner Hank Stephens

PLAN COMMISSION

Brian Hayes, Chairman
Brain Meyers
Cindy Vogel
Andrew Grunloh
Kevin Gouchenouer
Ken Wohltman
Mark Thies
Clint Spruell
Michael McHugh

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

Mike Mumm, Chairman
Andrew Grunloh
Mark Thies
Ken Wohltman
Don Bushue
Carrie Rodman
Brandon Weber

STEERING COMMITTEE

Jeffrey K. Speer
Kim Jansen
Jeff Althoff
Sara Ruholl
Katie Koester
Mel Stock
Dave Vukelich
Libby Moeller
Greg Sapp
Brian Hayes
Dr. Ruben Boyajian
Andrew Johnson
Bob Lakin
Andrew Grunloh

CITY STAFF

Steve Miller, City Administrator
Jeremy Heuerman, Director of Public Works
Todd Hull, Economic Development Director
Sasha Althoff, Economic Development Specialist
Greg Koester, City Planner

CONSULTANT

Stephanie Brown, Chastain & Associates LLC
Sophia Parr, Chastain & Associates LLC
Jacob Seid, Sightline Planning and Zoning

CITY STAFF CONTRIBUTORS

Jason McFarland, Police Chief (retired)
Kurt Davis, Police Chief
Brant Yochum, Fire Chief
Dennis Presley, Deputy City Administrator
Luke Thoele, City Engineer
Jodi Thoele, Tourism Director
Abbey Nosbisch, City Clerk
Bridget Polk, City Treasurer
Justin Hayes, Public Works Operation Manager

COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTORS

Paul Kuhns, Effingham County Sheriff
Josh Douthit, Effingham County Board Chairman
Effingham County Regional Airport Commission
Effingham County Chamber
Effingham Regional Growth Alliance
Effingham Public Transportation
Downtown Merchants Group
Community Survey Respondents
Community Member Meeting Attendees



SUMMARY

The City of Effingham stands at the crossroads of progress and tradition—a vibrant community known for its welcoming spirit, strong local economy, and commitment to quality of life. As a regional hub in south-central Illinois, Effingham has long served as a gateway for travelers, a center for commerce, and a home for families and businesses alike. The City's rich heritage, diverse neighborhoods, and scenic parks contribute to a sense of place that is both distinctive and enduring.

This Comprehensive Plan serves as a road map for Effingham's future, building on decades of thoughtful planning and months of community engagement. It is designed to guide growth, development, and investment over the coming years, ensuring that Effingham remains an attractive, resilient, and prosperous City for generations to come. Through extensive input from residents, business leaders, and community organizations, the plan reflects shared values and aspirations.

The plan addresses all facets of community life, from land use, housing, and transportation infrastructure to parks, recreation, and cultural enrichment. It provides a framework for coordinated decision-making among City leaders, staff, and local partners, and establishes clear goals and strategies to achieve Effingham's vision. Whether focused on revitalizing downtown, expanding pedestrian and bicycle networks, fostering a thriving economy, or protecting natural and historic resources, **the Comprehensive Plan is both a statement of policy and a call to action.**

Effingham's future will be shaped by the choices made today. With this Comprehensive Plan, the City reaffirms its commitment to collaboration, innovation, and community pride—laying the foundation for a thriving and connected Effingham where all residents can live, work, play, and grow.

A HISTORY OF PLANNING

The City of Effingham has set an example for communities across Illinois in the area of comprehensive planning. In 1944 the first Plan Commission was appointed by Ordinance 82. This was followed by the creation of a Zoning Commission to recommend Zoning Districts by Resolution #1-47. After adopting the first Zoning Ordinance (140), the City Council appointed a Building Official and members to a Zoning Board of Appeals with the Board serving as the Plan Commission by Ordinance No. 143 in 1948. In 1957, Ordinance 318 was adopted to form a Plan Commission for the purpose of preparing a comprehensive city plan for the guidance, direction and control of the growth and development of the City. As a result, the first Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1961. Since then, Effingham has regularly prepared and adopted new comprehensive plans and updates to guide its growth and development. The City has worked hard to pursue the goals and objectives of previous plans and with this new plan, the City continues to prioritize the needs of the community and plan for the future. As mentioned, while the focus of the plan is on the City itself, it is important to note that the City is a regional hub for economic activity and the surrounding communities are an important part of how Effingham develops. Effingham has always looked to collaborate with the surrounding areas such as Teutopolis, Lake Sara, Heartville, Altamont, and Dieterich in its planning processes and this new plan will be no different.

Effingham's planning processes have remained consolidated in one plan that acts as the City's current comprehensive plan. This document has helped the City plan for the future and address the needs and desires of the community. Today, the plan will be consolidated and modernized, taking all of the wonderful ideas and planning practices of the past and ensuring they meet the needs of the future.

Comprehensive Plan	Comprehensive Plan Updates	Growth Management Plan & Update	Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan	North Keller Drive Traffic Study	Housing & Economic Recovery Plan
1961 (1ST)	1978	2000	2011*	2018*	2023*
1975	1986	2006	Ameren Illinois Transportation Electrification Plan	Urban Forestry Management Plan	Community Revitalization Plan (IHDA)
1984		2014	2025*	2025*	2025*
1995		2017			
2026	← WE ARE HERE	2020			
		2021			

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

This Comprehensive Plan is a shared road map for the community's future. It provides guidance for decision-making, investment, and development over the next 10–20 years. Here's how different groups can use the plan:

ELECTED OFFICIALS

Use the plan to guide policy decisions, budget priorities, and long-term community investments. It offers a clear vision shaped by community input and helps ensure consistency across departments and terms of office.

CITY STAFF AND DEPARTMENTS

Reference the plan when developing capital improvement plans, evaluating development proposals, updating ordinances, or applying for grants. The goals and actions outlined provide a framework for aligning day-to-day operations with long-range priorities.

DEVELOPERS AND INVESTORS

Use the plan to understand the community's vision for growth and development. It highlights preferred land uses, infrastructure priorities, and areas targeted for redevelopment or investment—helping reduce risk and streamline the approval process.

RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Consult the plan to stay informed about planned improvements, growth areas, and community goals. Use it to advocate for neighborhood improvements, support grant applications, and participate in local initiatives.

BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND PLANNING BODIES

Refer to the plan when reviewing proposals, rezonings, and major projects to ensure consistency with the community's vision. It serves as a foundational document for decision-making and planning recommendations.

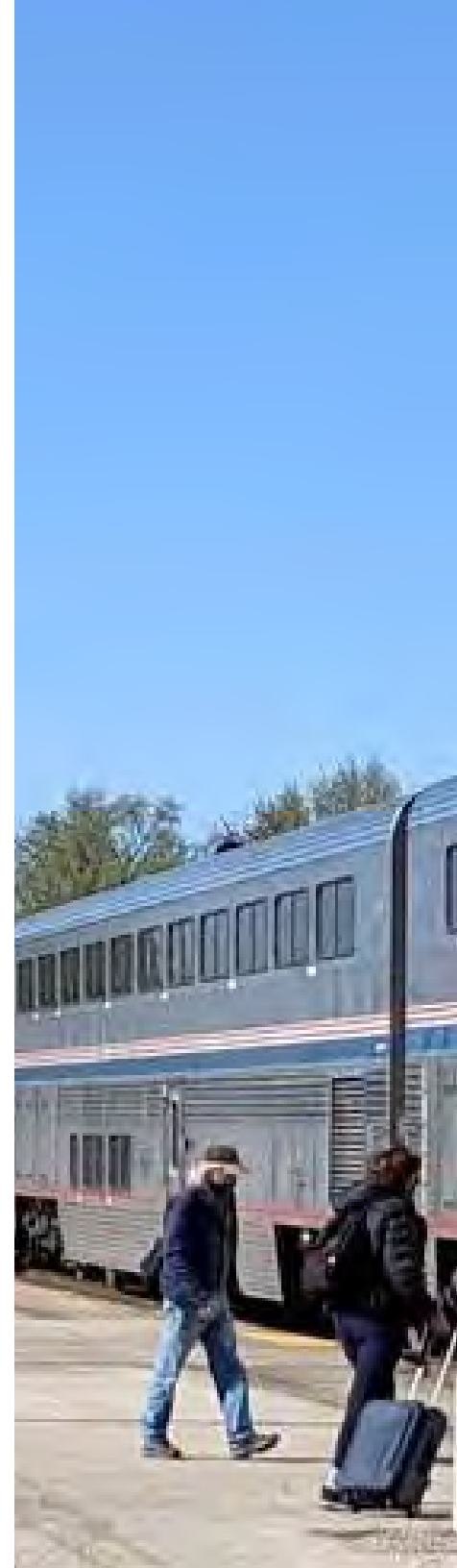
CITY BACKGROUND

Effingham, Illinois, has experienced notable changes in its demographic landscape over the past two decades, reflecting broader trends in both the region and the nation. Traditionally known as a small City with a strong sense of community, Effingham has gradually become more diverse, with incremental growth in residents from a range of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This demographic evolution has enriched the community's character and contributed to the expansion of local businesses, faith communities, and cultural events.

Over the last 20 years, the City's population has remained relatively stable, with modest growth attributable to both natural increase and in-migration. Effingham continues to serve as a regional hub, drawing individuals and families from throughout the region and beyond seeking employment opportunities, quality schools, and a vibrant small-town atmosphere. The population remains somewhat older than state and national averages, with a significant proportion of residents aged 65 and over. Effingham has retained a steady base of young families, thanks in part to affordable housing, recreational amenities, and access to educational resources.

Household sizes in Effingham have shifted slightly, with an increase in single-person and smaller households, reflecting changing lifestyles and national trends toward delayed marriage and smaller families. The local economy has also diversified, with a broader mix of professional, healthcare, retail, and manufacturing jobs attracting workers of various backgrounds. While the City's overall growth rate has slowed compared to previous decades, Effingham's stable population, and gradual diversification present both opportunities and challenges for community planning, service delivery, and civic engagement.

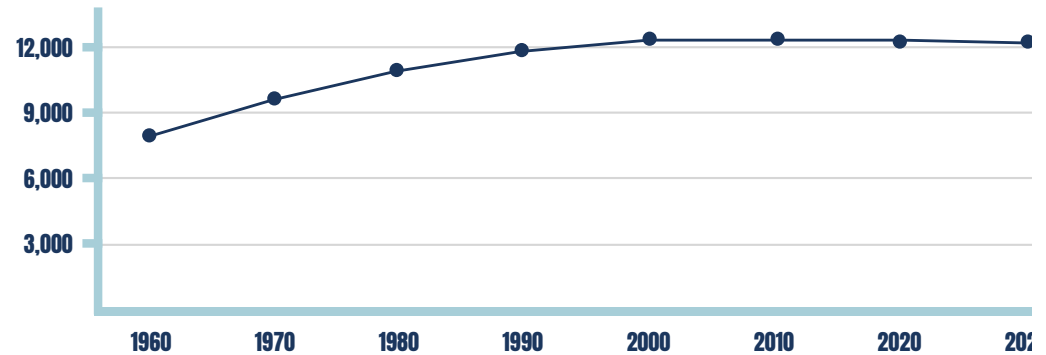
As Effingham looks to the future, understanding these demographic shifts is essential for meeting the needs of residents, fostering economic vitality, and supporting a welcoming, inclusive community. The City's comprehensive plan is designed to respond proactively to these trends, ensuring that Effingham remains a vibrant, connected, and resilient community for all who call it home.



DEMOGRAPHICS

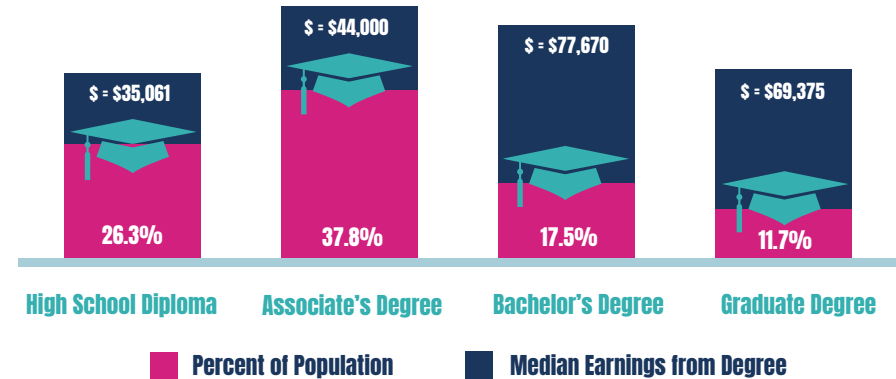
Population

The population of Effingham has been relatively stable in recent decades. In 1980 the population was at its lowest with just over 8,000 residents. Since then, the population saw steady growth. In 1990, the population was 11,927. At the 2020 census, the population was 12,252 and the projected population in 2025 is 12,373.



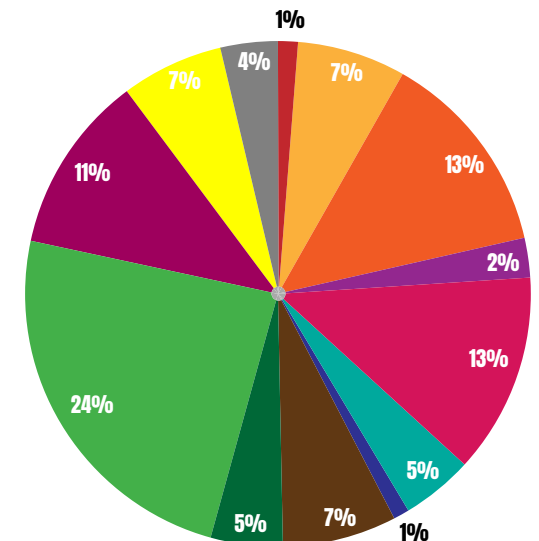
Education

The City of Effingham has a highly educated population of residents which speaks to its ability to provide for jobs that attract and retain a qualified professional workforce. Less than 7% of the population does not have a high school diploma while 67% of the population has at least an associates degree with almost 12% having a graduate degree.



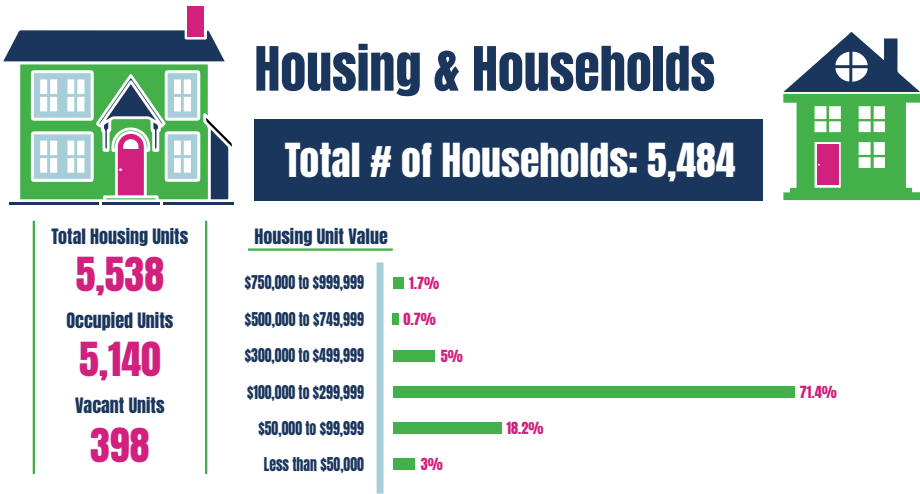
Income & Occupation

The median income for a household in Effingham is \$62,358. This is an increase of \$22,381 from 2010 when the median income was \$39,977. The majority of employed individuals within Effingham work in education, healthcare and social services. The City of Effingham provides many job opportunities to the region as well.



Household Size & Age

The average household size in Effingham at the 2020 census was 2.31 people per household which is below the U.S. average of 2.50. There are a total of 5,140 households in the City. One of the factors for a lower average household size could include an aging population which can have impacts on various aspects of life, including the types of housing that needs to be available to an older population. Almost 20% of the population is aged 65 or older.



Housing Affordability

The total number of housing units in Effingham is 5,140 with 3,268 owner-occupied and 1,872 renter-occupied. Effingham residents have different median monthly housing costs depending on if they rent or own their home. Renters have a median cost of \$696 and home owners have a median monthly mortgage of \$1,322. The median real estate tax paid by homeowners is \$2,721. Household sizes differ among owner and renter occupied housing with average household size of owner-occupied housing being 2.43 and average household size of renter-occupied housing being 2.10. The median value of homes in Effingham is \$166,700.



PLANNING PROCESS

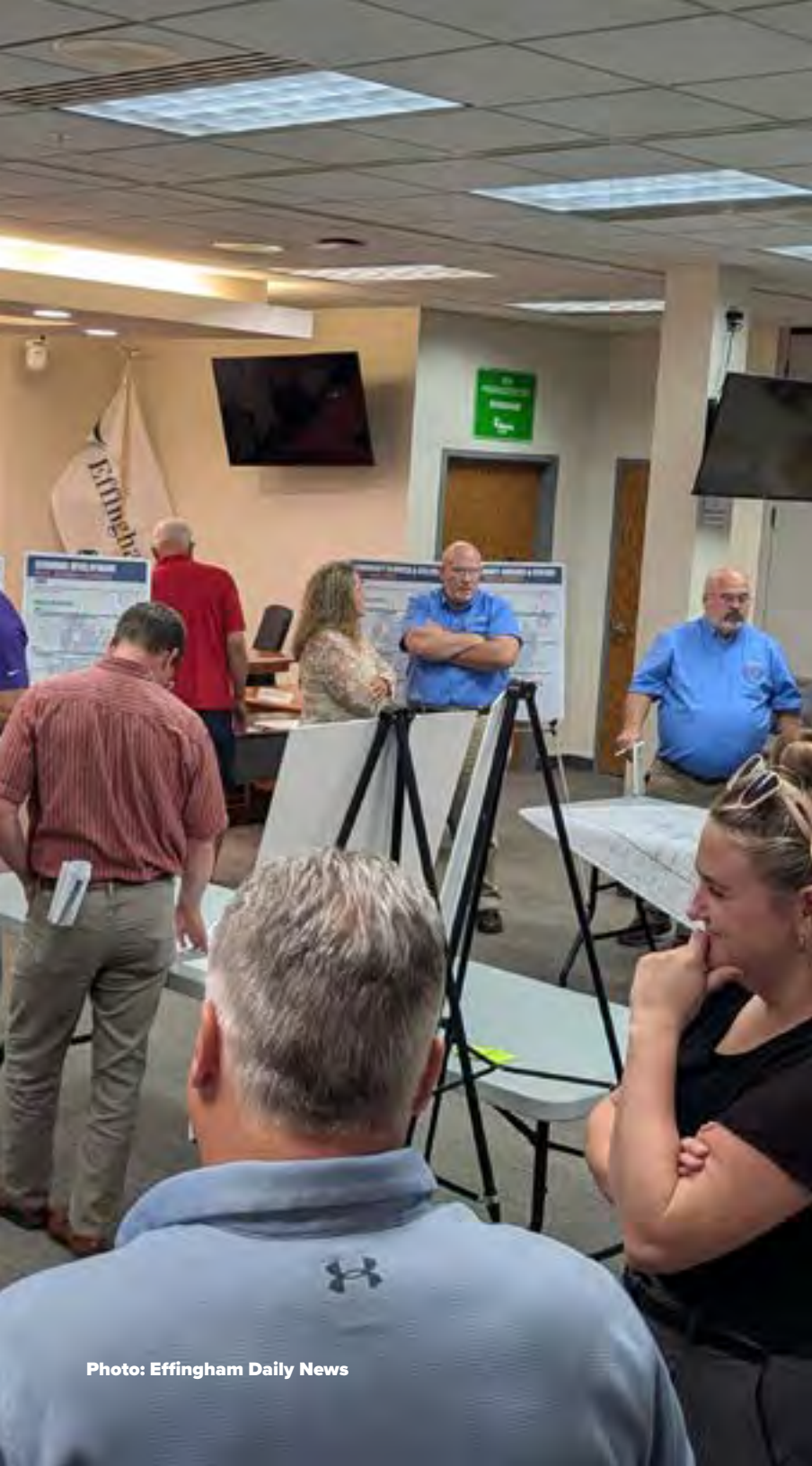
The development of this comprehensive plan followed a collaborative and inclusive process designed to reflect the needs and aspirations of the entire community. The process began with a thorough review of previous plans and policy documents to understand past goals, accomplishments, and ongoing challenges.

Community engagement was a central component throughout the planning effort. Residents, stakeholders, and business owners were invited to share their perspectives through an online survey, which gathered valuable input on priorities, concerns, and opportunities for the City's future. The City also hosted a series of focus group meetings, bringing together diverse voices to discuss key topics in greater depth and generate ideas for improvement.

In addition to community engagement, a wide spectrum of City staff played a critical role in shaping the plan. Regular calls and working sessions with staff provided technical insights, local expertise, and feedback on draft recommendations, ensuring that the plan is practical, actionable, and aligned with ongoing initiatives.

Through this multi-faceted process, the comprehensive plan is grounded in both community values and technical best practices, creating a clear road map for the City's growth and development.





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Effingham's Comprehensive Plan is shaped by a robust and intentional community engagement process designed to gather diverse perspectives and ensure the plan reflects local values and priorities. A variety of outreach methods were used to reach residents where they are—both online and in person.

Key Engagement Activities

Staff-Led Focus Groups:

Over several months, the City convened a wide-ranging series of focus groups to dive deeper into specific issues such as:

- Business & Industry Development
- Workforce, Jobs and Trades
- Childcare & Education
- Downtown Effingham
- Parks, Recreation & Tourism
- Housing & Residential Development
- Sustainability & Agriculture
- Transportation & Mobility
- Community Services & Seniors

These focus groups were open to the public and led by City staff. They resulted in hours of discussion and ideas for how to address challenges residents face throughout the City.

Citywide Community Survey:

A community-wide survey received over 1,000 responses, representing approximately 10% of Effingham's population. This high level of participation demonstrated strong public interest in the future of the City.

In-Person Engagement at Local Events:

Planners hosted informational booths at community events, providing opportunities for one-on-one conversations with residents. These events were informal and engaging, giving people a chance to share what they love about living in Effingham and what they would like to see improved.

2

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Effingham 2050 Comprehensive Plan sets a strategic direction for the community’s growth, development, and quality of life through the year 2050. Rooted in community engagement, technical analysis, and past planning efforts, this plan reflects Effingham’s vision to remain a resilient, welcoming, and forward-thinking city. It addresses housing, economic development, education, transportation, land use, and public services in an integrated way to guide decision-making for residents, businesses, and local leaders.

VISIONS FOR A THRIVING FUTURE

Each section of the plan encompasses a vision that the City can strive to reach in the next 10-20 years.

Housing options in Effingham are diverse and the market is sustainable, offering affordable and high-quality living options for all residents.



Downtown Effingham is the heart of the community. It is home to a robust selection of local businesses and creates a charming small-town atmosphere that brings residents inward and attracts visitors.

Banker Street, Fayette Avenue, Keller Drive and other major arterials are critical economic corridors with robust commercial and retail activities that connect all aspects of the community.

The City is a destination for new and innovative industries serving the region and beyond.

Effingham is an innovator, providing the skills and knowledge necessary for future opportunities.

The City of Effingham maintains efficient and effective public safety services.

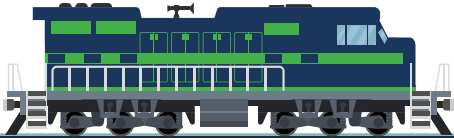
Effingham is a connected and resilient community where accessible, high-quality services and utilities enhance the well-being and quality of life for every resident.



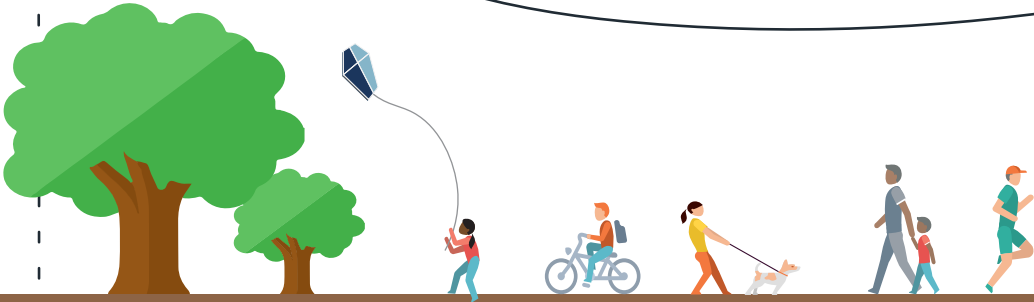
Effingham provides an efficient and effective transportation system that prioritizes circulation, maintenance and safety for all modes of transportation.

Residents and visitors are able to safely and efficiently travel throughout the City using public transportation with improvements.

Effingham offers exceptional freight, commuter rail and air services that support the local and regional economies.



Effingham envisions a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable network of parks, trails, and recreational programs that inspire healthy lifestyles, foster community connections, and celebrate the natural beauty of the City.



PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Together, these interconnected visions form a path forward for Effingham, where housing, infrastructure, economic development, quality of life, and public services all support and reinforce one another. No single element stands alone; each depends on the others to create a thriving community. This holistic approach underscores the importance of continuous planning — not as a one-time effort, but as an ongoing commitment to adapting, refining, and striving toward a vibrant, resilient, inclusive, and healthy future for all who call Effingham home.

3

THE PLAN

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Summary highlighting the community accomplishments since the previous comprehensive plan updates.

- ✓ The completion of Outer Belt West to relieve traffic congestion along Keller Drive and provide an alternate route to Lake Sara.
- ✓ The completion of obtaining an alternate raw water source (i.e., the Kaskaskia River) for the City's future needs over the next 50 years.
- ✓ Completion of multiple overpass that separate grade for rail and roadway traffic.
- ✓ Complete revitalization of the downtown and surrounding area.
- ✓ Extending the life of two existing Tax Increment Finance (TIF) Districts for economic development purposes.
- ✓ Obtaining a new Enterprise Zone (EZ) for incentives to attract business and housing development.
- ✓ Creating five different Business Districts to support local businesses and infrastructure.
- ✓ Securing the Opportunity Zone that has also opened multiple grant opportunities.
- ✓ Completing upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant for additional capacity and future city growth.
- ✓ Separation of storm water and sanitary sewers as required per environmental regulations.
- ✓ Construction of a new Police Station.
- ✓ Completion of a Central Fire Station and obtaining a new ISO Rating of 2.
- ✓ Completion of Fire Station #2.
- ✓ Obtaining new flood plain maps and floodplain regulations.
- ✓ Obtaining a partial Quiet Zone of the CN railroad line within the northern portion of the City.
- ✓ Completion of bike paths/lanes with the community and TREC trails.
- ✓ Upgrading major corridors such as Maple Street and connection of collector streets such as Heritage Avenue and Blohm Avenue.
- ✓ Implementing energy efficient equipment at all public facilities such as VFDs, LEDs, and climate controls .
- ✓ Supporting local schools by providing TIF funds for vocational training.
- ✓ Assisting the Park District by financially supporting projects such as the Skate Park and Dog Park.
- ✓ Supporting the Chamber of Commerce with local events through the Tourism Department funds.
- ✓ Supporting the County Courts facility construction with TIF funds.
- ✓ Supporting the Library by purchasing an existing building that has since been renovated.

A VISION FOR EFFINGHAM BY 2050

Effingham is a City of hometown pride focused on progressive growth to support quality housing choices and promote a future-focused workforce and business climate, all in a safe and sustainable environment.

Housing options in Effingham are diverse and the market is sustainable, offering affordable and high-quality living options for all residents.

Downtown Effingham is the heart of the community. It is home to a robust selection of local businesses and creates a welcoming small-town atmosphere that attracts residents and visitors alike.

Banker Street, Fayette Avenue, Keller Drive, 3rd Street, and other major arterials are critical economic corridors with robust commercial and retail activities that connect all aspects of the community.

The City is a destination for new and innovative industries and is surrounded by an agriculturally based community serving the region and beyond.

Effingham is an innovator, providing the skills and knowledge necessary for future opportunities.

The City of Effingham maintains efficient and effective public safety services.

Effingham is a connected and resilient community where accessible, high-quality services and utilities enhance the well-being and quality of life for every resident.

Effingham provides an efficient transportation system that prioritizes circulation, maintenance and safety for all modes of transportation.

Residents and visitors are able to safely and efficiently travel throughout the City using public transportation.

Effingham offers exceptional freight, commuter rail and air services that support the local and regional economies.

Effingham envisions a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable network of parks, trails, and recreational programs that inspire healthy lifestyles, foster community connections, and celebrate the City's natural beauty.

FOCUS AREAS

The following focus areas represent the essential building blocks of a vibrant, equitable, and sustainable future for our City. Each section of the comprehensive plan explores a key dimension of community life, providing strategies and actions to guide growth, investment, and improvement.

1. HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS (H)

This section examines the variety, affordability, and quality of housing, as well as the character and vitality of our neighborhoods.

2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (ED)

The plan identifies opportunities to strengthen local businesses, attract new investment, expand job opportunities, and foster innovation, ensuring the long-term health of our local economy.

3. COMMUNITY SERVICES & UTILITIES (CS)

This section addresses the delivery and future needs of essential services—including public safety, libraries, health, water, sewer, and technology—ensuring they are accessible, resilient, and adaptable to change.

4. TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY (T)

This section outlines strategies to enhance the safety, accessibility, and connectivity of streets, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle networks, supporting economic growth and everyday convenience.

5. QUALITY OF LIFE (Q)

This section envisions a diverse, accessible, and well-maintained network of public spaces that enrich quality of life, foster community pride, and promote environmental stewardship.

6. ZONING & LAND USE

This section provides zoning and land use policies that shape the physical development of the City.



HOUSING & NEIGHBORHOODS

in this section:

Housing Challenges and Opportunities

Effingham's housing challenges echo national trends, which include higher costs, higher interest rates, and a lack of available housing stock. These challenges impact current residents and those looking to move to the area. Prioritizing the right policies and strategies to improve housing options will be an important part of Effingham's future.



EFFINGHAM HOUSING

Effingham offers a diverse housing market that reflects both the City's rich history and its evolving needs. As the community grows, challenges such as housing affordability, aging structures, and the need for diverse housing options have become more apparent. However, these challenges also present opportunities for strategic development, revitalization, and the expansion of housing choices to meet the needs of residents at all stages of life. By balancing preservation with new construction and encouraging sustainable growth, Effingham can enhance its residential offerings while maintaining its small-town charm. Addressing these housing issues thoughtfully will help ensure a vibrant and inclusive community for years to come.

VISION

Housing options in Effingham are diverse and the market is sustainable, offering affordable and high-quality living options for all residents.

HOUSING OPTIONS

Throughout the comprehensive planning process, housing was identified as the top priority and challenge for the community. Providing more obtainable housing to help support educations, industrial and retail growth.

The City offers a diverse range of housing options with it's housing stock including single-family homes, duplexes, multi-family apartment complexes, and senior living communities. The majority of Effingham's residential areas are comprised of single-family homes, which dominate the outskirts and suburban neighborhoods, providing a quieter, low-density living environment. These homes range from historic houses in established neighborhoods to newer development.

Higher- density housing is concentrated closer to downtown Effingham, where mixed use housing and multi-family apartments provide housing options for young professionals, renters and smaller households. Several apartment complexes and duplexes can be found in areas offering convenient access to shopping, dining and employment. Affordable housing developments and senior living facilities are also distributed throughout the City, ensuring housing remains accessible to individuals across various income levels and life stages.

Despite these housing options, the City faces challenges in meeting the demand for diverse and affordable housing. Housing costs have significantly risen in recent years due to a limited supply making it difficult for some residents to find affordable places to live. Additionally, there is a need for more workforce housing and multi-family units to accommodate

population growth and economic expansion. As the workforce grows, single-family housing is also needed to accommodate families that want to move into the City.

Strategic planning will be essential to balancing growth, affordability and housing diversity. By encouraging mixed-use developments and revitalizing underutilized properties near the downtown core, the City can create a more dynamic and accessible housing environment that meets the needs of its residents. The challenges and opportunities facing housing in Effingham was explored in depth in 2024 through a Housing and Economic Recovery Plan.

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Effingham has the opportunity to develop residential neighborhoods that foster a strong sense of community and offer a high quality of life for its residents. The City should include a variety of housing options, access to green spaces, and a balance of privacy and connectivity. Focus should be placed on developing residential areas that offer a peaceful, small-town atmosphere while incorporating amenities that enhance residents' everyday lives.

Incorporating green spaces, parks and walking trails into residential neighborhoods will provide opportunities for outdoor activities, relaxation and community gatherings. These spaces can serve as focal points for families and individuals, enhancing the overall livability of the area. Additionally, tree-lined streets and attractive landscaping can contribute to the neighborhood's aesthetic appeal, creating an environment that is pleasant and welcoming. Ensuring that every residential development includes accessible green spaces will help make Effingham a more enjoyable place to live.



2024 HOUSING & ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN

In 2024, the City adopted a Housing and Economic Recovery Plan that aimed to create strategies for improving the economy through housing and non-housing initiatives. That plan is incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan in full and is the basis for the establishment of housing goals and objectives.

HOUSING CHALLENGES

1. Even amidst robust job growth, not enough new homes have been added to the area housing stock to meet demand, meaning that, as supply decreases, housing is increasingly difficult or impossible to find for incoming workers.
2. Moreover, the long-term pace of residential development activity within Effingham County as a whole has not responded to the growing need for additional housing and barely outpaces levels of expected housing unit loss over time.
3. While housing is relatively affordable in Effingham compared to many markets across the state and mid-west, housing cost burden is common at lower income levels, meaning viable housing options are extremely limited for lower wage workers.
4. There are significant housing mismatches within the City that intensify the housing needs by creating imbalance in the housing ecosystem and limiting access to housing for incoming workers.
5. Housing is needed to ensure housing security for the City's most financially vulnerable residents, spur economic growth through workforce expansion, and provide a foundation for long-term community prosperity with a balanced housing stock.
6. The cost of land has drastically increased making entry into the development market extremely challenging. Coupled with the increased costs in providing infrastructure, new lot development has become extremely cost prohibitive.

HOUSING NEEDED

Over the next ten years, the following numbers of units are needed to regain housing balance, relieve pressure on the City's stock of naturally occurring affordable and workforce housing, and promote the overall health of the housing ecosystem.

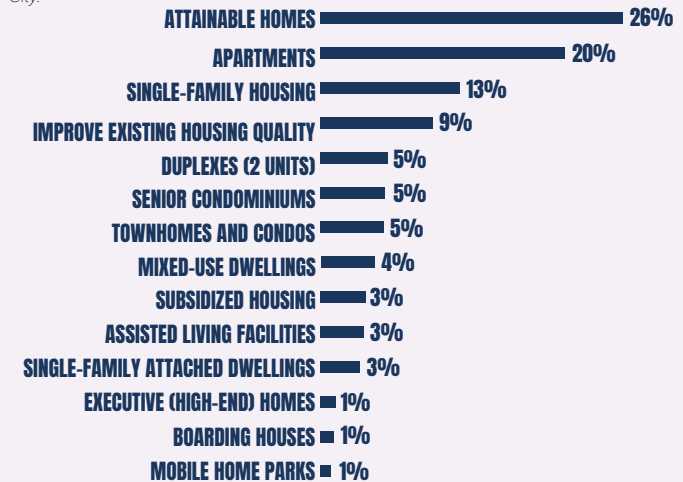
100-125 AFFORDABLE UNITS + 200-300 MODERATELY PRICED UNITS + 250-350 HIGH END UNITS



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

Types of Housing Needed

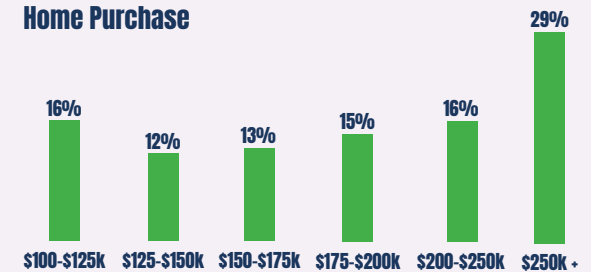
Community priorities regarding the types of housing that is needed in the City.



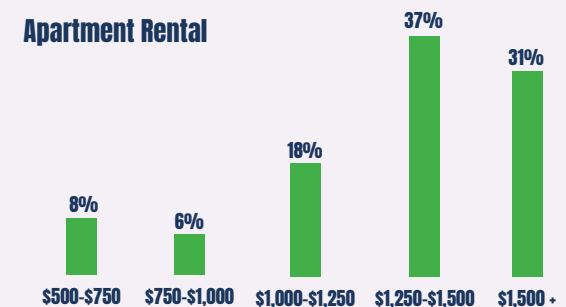
Desired Pricing

The following charts reflect the desired price ranges residents are looking for in regards to both a home purchase (mortgage) and rental costs.

Home Purchase



Apartment Rental



DIRECTION OF GROWTH

The City's ability to accommodate new housing within its existing municipal boundaries is limited by several key constraints. Much of the land within City limits is already developed or committed to specific uses, leaving little room for large-scale residential expansion. Physical barriers such as the floodplains of the Little Wabash River and Salt Creek restrict development to the east and west, while existing transportation corridors and industrial land uses create additional challenges for infill housing. To truly address these constraints, it will be important to look beyond our current boundaries to plan for future housing needs, particularly in areas where services can be extended and development can occur more efficiently.

EXTRATERRITORIAL JURISDICTION

The area within 1.5 miles of Effingham's corporate limits—referred to as the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction—presents a key opportunity for accommodating future residential growth. Unlike the more constrained areas within City limits, this transitional zone includes undeveloped land that is largely free from environmental barriers and has strong proximity to existing infrastructure. Its location allows for logical extensions of City utilities such as water and sewer, making it a cost-effective area for outward expansion.

LAKE SARA

Lake Sara continues to be an important part of the community's broader growth strategy. Its continued development requires thoughtful coordination between jurisdictions, environmental stewardship, and infrastructure planning. With the right investments and policy frameworks, the area has the potential to support a range of high-quality housing options while preserving the scenic and recreational character that makes it so appealing.

PERIPHERAL GROWTH AREAS

Effingham's most promising directions for outward residential growth lie along its northwest, northern, and southeastern edges. The north and northwest corridors benefit from existing transportation routes and nearby commercial services, making them convenient for future neighborhoods while maintaining a quieter, more suburban character. The southeastern area of the City has already seen residential subdivision activity, suggesting a continued market interest and development momentum in that direction. However, this area is near the Effingham County Regional Airport. These peripheral areas offer the City a chance to guide future growth in a way that extends infrastructure efficiently and supports compact, yet context-sensitive, development patterns.



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

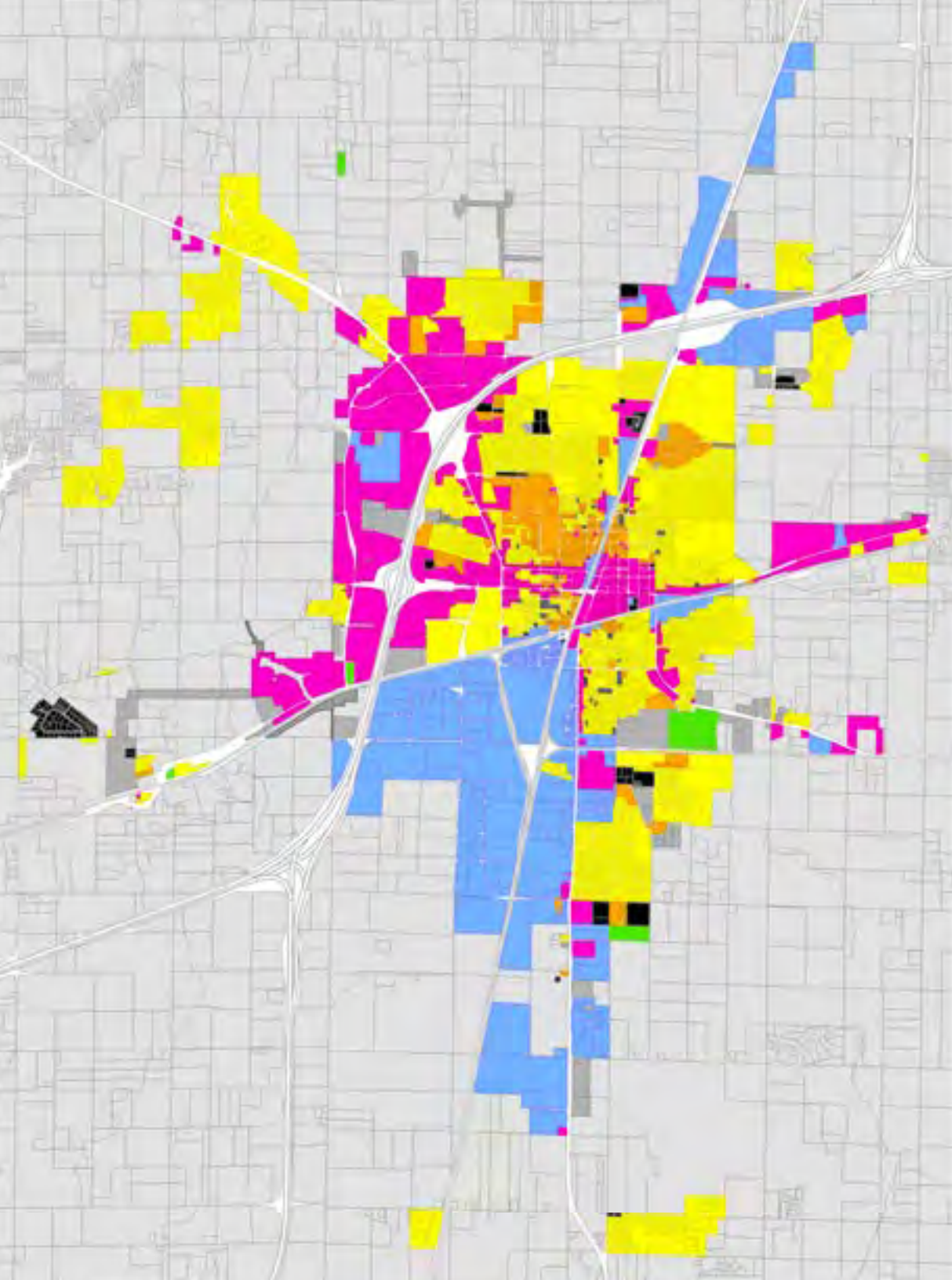
Effingham Housing Trends

The City of Effingham tracks, through their building permits, the number of new housing units built each year within its municipal border. Housing permits show modest new single-family construction each year, while multi-family development has been minimal. The majority of multi-family units built in the last year were 8-units. Most residential activity centers on additions and improvements rather than new unit creation, indicating slow housing growth driven by reinvestment in existing homes.

Effingham Financial Tools

The City of Effingham currently supports investment in housing rehabilitation as well as new units through a variety of financial tools and incentives. The **Enterprise Zone** allows for sales tax exemption on the purchase of raw building materials for the units and the abatement of real estate taxes on the increase to the base amount for 5 years on single-family homes and 3 years on multi-family homes. The **Residential TIF Rehabilitation Program** is another tool which helps to lessen the financial gap for rehabilitation of housing units within the community. Supporting these incentives will only further assist in the reduction of the housing units needed within the community.





HOUSING DISTRICTS

Effingham’s residential neighborhoods have a long history of development and redevelopment that dates to the nineteenth century. This history has created a modern tapestry of residential buildings that complement one another with a mix of single-family, two-family, and three-family homes. In several neighborhoods, the number of dwelling units in adjacent homes may be different, but the height of the building and width of the setbacks are consistent.

The current structure of the Zoning Ordinance separates different housing types into different zoning districts. Many older neighborhoods in the City have a mix of housing types that complement one another; however, the City’s Zoning Map separates them into different zoning districts. For example, in the areas around Downtown, several neighborhoods are divided into three or four different residential zoning districts even though they have similar housing types and overall design.

Modern zoning ordinances allow single-family and two-family homes as permitted uses in the same zoning district. If a single-family home and a two-family home have generally the same character in terms of lot area, lot width, height, and setbacks then they should be allowed in the same zoning district – especially if they are already located on the same street. Since the PRD, R-3A, R-3B, and R-3C Districts each include very few parcels, it would be wise to strategically consolidate each of them as part of larger zoning districts.

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Single-Family Zoning |  Multi-Family Zoning |
|  Commercial Zones |  Industrial Zones |
|  Non-Urban Areas |  Housing Districts to Consolidate |

HOUSING GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1

H.1 Advance the housing development infrastructure through capacity-building.

- H.1.1 Create a multi-stakeholder community housing task force that builds on the work currently being done by the PAVE Housing Action Team.
- H.1.2 Increase Community participation with the City in the identification of priority sites for housing and/ or mixed-use development.
- H.1.3 Identify one or more desired workforce housing projects and release an RFQ to spur developer interest.
- H.1.4 Create development guidance and blueprints for standard, pre-approved housing types that can be built more cost-effectively and quickly than those designed “from scratch.”
- H.1.5 Support public infrastructure improvements through Enterprise Zone, Business District and TIF District Funds for capacity-building developments.
- H.1.6 Create a section on the City’s website for housing development related information.
- H.1.7 Continually monitor the changing housing development needs in Effingham.

GOAL 2

H.2 Strengthen the local housing ecosystem through local housing policies and updates to the municipal code.

- H.2.1 Reduce barriers to development through strategic- zoning and subdivision ordinance update, review of building codes and enforcement.
- H.2.2 Create more development opportunities for second and third floor residential units Downtown.
- H.2.3 Identify populations that need affordable or workforce housing and where philanthropic or government funding/financing is available.

GOAL 3

H.3 Promote well-designed, safe and connected neighborhoods by supporting infrastructure improvements, sustainable building practices and housing rehabilitation programs that preserve the character of existing neighborhoods and meet the needs of future residents.

- H.3.1 Integrate green spaces, parks, and walking trails into new residential developments, ensuring that residents have access to outdoor recreational areas within walking distance of their homes.
- H.3.2 Promote attractive streetscapes by encouraging tree planting, sidewalk connectivity, and the use of landscaping to enhance the neighborhood's aesthetic appeal.
- H.3.3 Prioritize walkability and connectivity within neighborhoods by ensuring pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and safe routes to essential amenities such as schools, grocery stores, and public transportation.
- H.3.4 Support mixed-use developments that blend residential, retail, and recreational spaces, offering residents a vibrant and well-connected environment.
- H.3.5 Ensure that all new residential developments have sufficient infrastructure including roads, utilities and public services to meet the needs of expanding neighborhoods.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

in this section:

Greater Downtown Area

Major Business/Retail Corridors

Business & Industry

Workforce & Education

Effingham's local and regional economy forms the backbone of the community's success as a business hub for central Illinois. The city's location at the crossroads of Interstates 57 and 70, combined with a vibrant downtown, creates opportunities for both industries and small businesses to thrive.



PART 1

GREATER DOWNTOWN AREA

Downtown Effingham is the heart of the City, blending small-town charm with a rich history that dates back to its early days as a railroad hub. Historic brick buildings line the streets, housing a mix of locally owned shops, restaurants, living units, and businesses that create a welcoming and vibrant atmosphere. The area's well-preserved architecture reflects the City's past while providing a unique backdrop for community events and gatherings. With its vibrant and welcoming atmosphere, downtown Effingham continues to be a focal point for commerce, culture and connection. Its timeless character and strong sense of community make it a treasured part of the City's identity.

VISION

Downtown Effingham is the heart of the community. It is home to a robust selection of local businesses and creates a welcoming small-town atmosphere that brings residents inward and attracts visitors.

DOWNTOWN OPPORTUNITIES

Downtown Effingham has a long history and provides a quaint atmosphere and small town charm. From the historic courthouse structure to the Heart Theater, the City has maintained architectural characteristics that contribute to a unique and appealing place. As the County seat of Effingham County, downtown also has an active business atmosphere and attracts a large workforce from outside of the City.

BUSINESSES AND STOREFRONTS

Over the years, like any other City, Effingham has welcomed new business while others have left the community. Currently, the downtown area provides a variety of employment opportunities, shopping and dining. There are a multitude of different kinds of clothing boutiques including bridal stores. Home grown variety of restaurants provide residents and visitors with options for dining. With banks, professional services, and the City and County buildings, there is a large influx of people into the greater downtown area every day. Business owners are able to utilize the City's TIF funding to help improve their storefronts which can benefit the overall aesthetic of the entire downtown.

One of the challenges facing existing businesses and visitors is access to high-speed internet. In addition, ongoing maintenance and street beautification efforts enhance the downtown experience for businesses and visitors.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Many residents and visitors enjoy visiting downtown and feel there are plenty of options to keep them busy. The City of Effingham, Chamber of Commerce and

Downtown businesses host multiple events that draw many people from all over the County and the region including the Ham Jam, Cruise Night and Hometown Christmas.

The Effingham Convention and Visitors Bureau is a big part of drawing visitors into the City, including into downtown. Large scale events are a busy time for both the City's Public Works Department and Police Department. The police provide security at events as public works ensures set up and clean up.

DOWNTOWN PARKING

One of the biggest perceived challenges facing downtown is parking. With growth comes an influx of people and it becomes more and more challenging to find a parking space close to their destination. The City offers on street parking as well as public parking lots that exist throughout the downtown area.

The City has explored the development of a parking garage to address the downtown parking needs, particularly for events. However, the high cost of constructing and maintaining a parking garage makes it a low priority for this Comprehensive Plan .



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

Support of Parking Options

Support for different solutions to solve parking challenges.

MORE OFF-STREET SURFACE PARKING



CONSTRUCTION OF PARKING GARAGES



MORE ON-STREET PARKING



REDUCING BUSINESS PARKING REQUIREMENTS IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA



INCREASING BUSINESS PARKING REQUIREMENTS IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA



THE HEART THEATRE

The Heart Theatre is one of two examples in Effingham of the Art Deco style that was popular from 1920 - 1940. The cream and maroon terra-cotta tiles are a perfect match for the neon and marquee lights.

For many years, the Effingham community and its guests visited the Heart Theatre, with many experiencing their very first movie there. Unfortunately, it closed, and downtown lost one of its most beloved gathering places and a treasured piece of its history. In the past decade, the Heart has had owners work towards keeping the building in good condition. In 2022, a new owner conducted studies and had the property listed on National Register of Historic Places and has since donated it to The Heart Theater, Inc., a nonprofit organization. A Board of Directors has been elected and gathered for a strategic planning retreat on historic theater restoration and operations and operation of nonprofit management and fundraising. The goal is to renovate maintaining the Art Deco style and reopen the “The Heart” for enjoyment by all.

EFFINGHAM COUNTY CULTURAL CENTER AND MUSEUM

The Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum Association came into existence as the result of a desire to promote interpretive culture and history as a means of increasing public awareness of the history of Effingham County and the National Road.

Through interpretive first person impressions, artifact displays and other social reenactments of this culture, it creates the “emotional archaeology” that was once associated with the typical rural family on the National Road, as well as with the great effect which being a “Crossroads County” has had on the area.

These “hands-on” activities, allowing the public to engage in interactive history in the Effingham County Cultural Center and Museum, will create a tourism beacon for the visitor to spend “quality time” in Effingham County.



DOWNTOWN IMPROVEMENTS

- Street Parking
- Commercial
- Public Parking Lot
- Institutional

Parking Spots

There are a total of 881 parking spots in the downtown area with 530 off-street parking stalls and 351 on-street spaces.

Entry Pillars

Construction of decorative pillars around the perimeter of downtown gives the aesthetic of a coordinated and cohesive district.

Housing

Effingham should consider development of mixed-use housing that incorporates both retail and residential uses in one building. Additionally, the City could pursue development of small-scale apartment buildings in the downtown area with 12-20 units. This scale will help to maintain the small-town aesthetic while providing housing options.

Beautification Efforts

Maintaining the landscaping and repairs of the roadway along Jefferson Avenue is a priority for ensuring the aesthetic of the downtown area remains charming and quaint.

Accessible Crosswalks

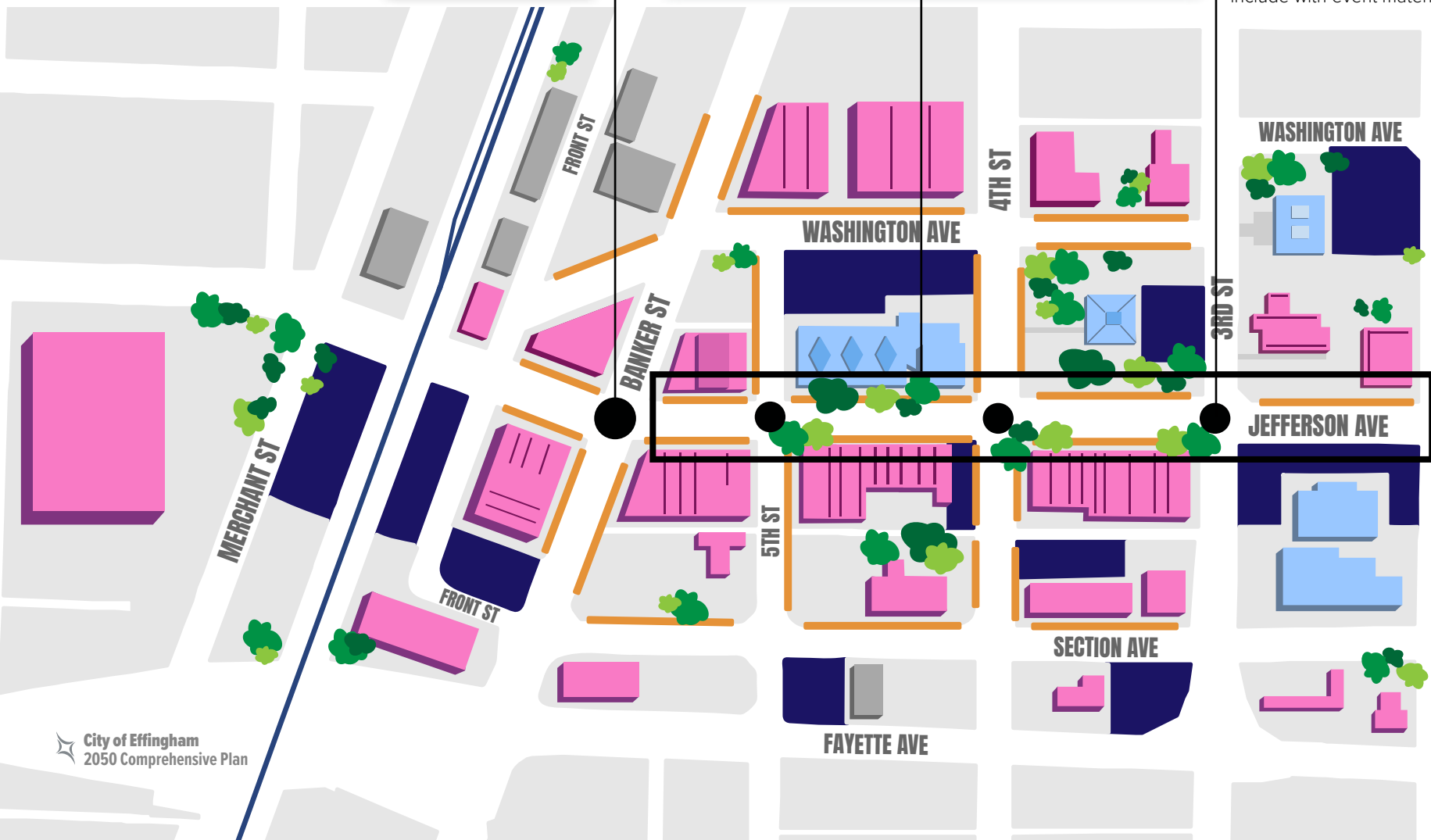
Improvements to crosswalks throughout downtown can help with accessibility. This may include pedestrian crossing signals.

High Speed Internet

Providing high speed internet in the downtown area can attract new businesses and improve operations of current businesses.

Parking Wayfinding

Consider more signage for existing lots as well as a QR code for maps to include with event materials.





DOWNTOWN FOOTPRINT

The current footprint of Downtown is captured by the City's B-3 Zoning District, which is roughly bounded by Washington Avenue, 3rd Street, Section Avenue, and Front Street. This area contains the historic core of Downtown Effingham. However, to many residents and visitors, Downtown also includes nearby areas that include a mix of commercial, residential, and civic institutions, such as the library, post office, and City Hall. The City may want to consider expanding Downtown to attract investment and support small businesses. A larger, more diverse Downtown can help create a stronger tax base and economic engine for the City. Modifications to the zoning map could include more area for a variety of residential uses that can provide a built-in customer base for businesses and encourage Downtown activity during evenings and weekends. In addition, a larger Downtown allows for more public spaces, events, and community gathering points.

The City should consider expanding the B-3 District to include Fayette Avenue to the south, St. Anthony Avenue to the north, Willow Street to the east, and Maple Street to the west. Currently, downtown businesses are not subject to the off-street parking requirements found in other commercial zoning districts. This policy has benefited downtown and the City should retain this regulation if the boundaries of the B-3 are expanded. This effort would optimize downtown development by bringing more businesses and visitors into the core of Effingham. As more dense development occurs over time, the City can begin planning for the development of a parking garage that will accommodate future growth to the downtown area. Beyond the B-3 Zoning District, the City could explore other updates to the use, bulk, and off-street parking requirements of surrounding zoning efforts to support the vibrancy of the downtown area.

These changes are illustrated in the map on the following page.



DOWNTOWN EFFINGHAM

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1

ED.1 Prioritize maintenance and beautification of downtown and ensure safety and accessibility access for all.

- ED.1.1 Ensure Jefferson Avenue, Washington Avenue, Sections Avenue, Market Avenue and perpendicular streets between Maple Street and Willow Street are kept in a state of good repair.
- ED.1.2 Prioritize safe sidewalks and compliance with all ADA standards when reconstructing sidewalks.
- ED.1.3 Increase more “green” space along Jefferson Avenue by installing additional planters and pursue options to install trees where feasible.
- ED.1.4 Pursue installation of an entryway or pillars at Banker Street and Jefferson Ave.

GOAL 2

ED.2 Adapt technological advancements which enhance the business environment and visitor experience in the downtown area.

- ED.2.1 Pursue installation of high-speed internet throughout the downtown area to improve business operations and promote the district as an attractive business location.
- ED.2.2 Consider implementation of a parking app that allows users to see where there are open parking spaces.
- ED.2.3 Begin planning for the development of a parking garage that will accommodate future growth to the downtown area.
- ED.2.4 Improve speaker and sound system throughout the area that can be used to enhance the downtown experience throughout the year.
- ED.2.5 Develop a creative and engaging wayfinding system throughout the downtown area.
- ED.2.6 Install and maintain shade trees in downtown right-of-way and open spaces.

GOAL 3

ED.3 Ensure zoning, incentives and design standards help to create a vibrant, pleasant, and growing downtown.

ED.3.1 Implement zoning recommendations to enhance development in the downtown district.

ED.3.2 Ensure the Central Redevelopment TIF District is maintained and continues to provide rehabilitation opportunities and business facade improvement programs.

ED.3.3 Implement an expanded B-3 Zoning District to relieve parking restraints and spur commercial and residential development

ED.3.4 Create a new Zoning District (B-3a) to provide a smooth transition from B-3 to B-2 Zoning Districts.

GOAL 4

ED.4 Continue to foster downtown as a destination - a place for community gathering and cultural experiences.

ED.4.1 Encourage the existence of a downtown business organization dedicated to supporting and promoting activities and events that bring residents and visitors downtown.





PART 2

MAJOR BUSINESS/RETAIL CORRIDORS

South Banker Street, Fayette Avenue, Keller Drive and 3rd Street (N. Rt 45) are critical corridors connecting the Effingham community to the businesses and retail districts throughout the City.

Banker Street (IL Rt. 45) serves as a primary north-south thoroughfare in Effingham. While, developed, an abundance of opportunities for development exist, particularly, the potential to construct residential developments, grow industry, and attract and expand commercial businesses. Its proximity to rail spurs and Interstate 57/70 only support further development of this area.

Fayette Avenue, which is currently undergoing a major reconstruction project by IDOT serves to be a major east/west arterial through the city. The change in landscape from this reconstruction project opens properties for new businesses and developments and has direct access to the Interstate Interchange.

Keller Drive has served as a major retail district and is growing to the east and west of Avenue of Mid-America and Ford Avenue. Future infrastructure is planned to spur development to prime commercial property, enhancing the value of the 40,000 ADT along the adjacent Interstate System.

3rd Street (N. Rt 45) provides a north/south arterial between Fayette and Interstate 57/70. Commercial development continues to grow and serves as the direct access point to the greater downtown area.

VISION

Banker Street, Fayette Avenue, Keller Drive, 3rd Street and other major arterials are critical economic corridors with robust commercial and retail activities that connect all aspects of the community.

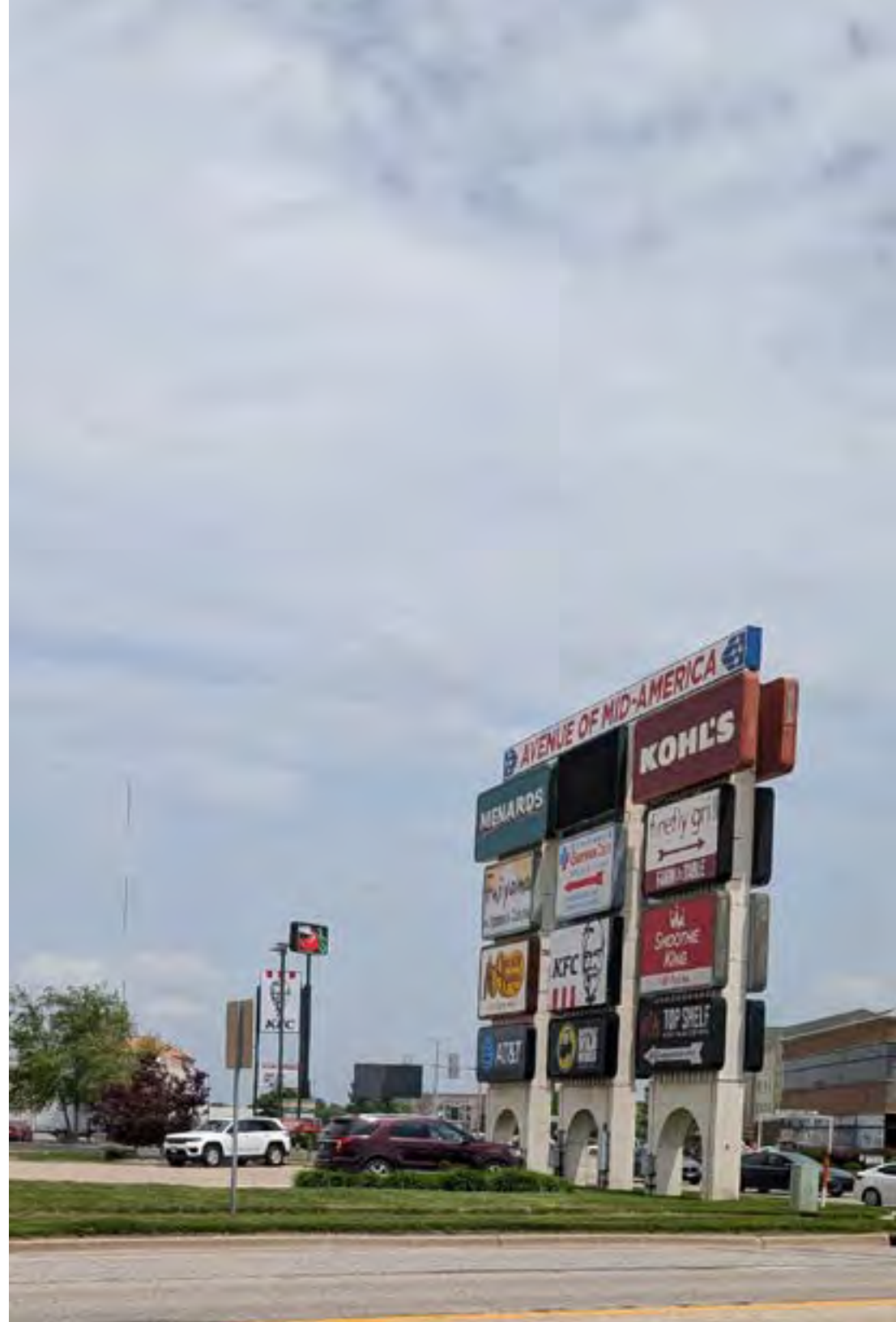
CORRIDOR OPPORTUNITIES

LAND USES

The corridors are all a mix of uses ranging from residential to commercial services and industrial production. There are many under developed properties as well as properties ripe for redevelopment.

As individual business districts, the way each area develops should be cohesive and designed for all modes of transportation. Considerations for access to business, height, bulk, and setbacks of buildings, as well as location of parking areas should be thoughtfully designed and critically reviewed.

Chapter 2 covers a range of financial incentives and opportunities available to developers as the corridors grow and evolve.



MAJOR BUSINESS/RETAIL CORRIDORS

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 5

ED.5 Pursue funding for the development of an underpass or overpass on South Banker Street at the east-west rail crossing.

ED.5.1 Coordinate with Illinois Department of Transportation on planning and funding the underpass or overpass.

ED.5.2 Start including the project on the 5-year plan with IDOT.

ED.5.3 Coordinate with businesses to ensure plans allow for access or continued success of existing business.

GOAL 6

ED.6 Pursue funding for the Ford Avenue extension and roundabout at the intersection of 4th Street and Rickelman Avenue.

ED.6.1 Continue to promote available incentives and grants for development.

ED.6.2 Continue to invest in critical infrastructure to support development.

GOAL 7

ED.7 Promote quality development for the revitalization of the Village Square Mall.

ED.7.1 Review development codes and ordinances to ensure zoning promotes desired development in the area.

ED.7.2. Incentivize developers through funding programs to promote business and residential developments.

GOAL 8

ED.8 Support the construction of an additional power substation on the south side of Effingham to accommodate future development.



PART 3

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

Effingham is a regional hub for large scale industries and attracts them with its unique location, tax incentives, and affordable living options. Funding sources such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts, Enterprise Zone, Business Districts and the Opportunity Zone offer many financial incentives for businesses looking to establish themselves in the area. New businesses and industries help the community as a whole by providing a higher tax base, jobs, and increased economic investment into the local economy.

VISION

The City is a destination for new and innovative industries and is surrounded by an agriculturally based community serving the region and beyond.



ATTRACTING BUSINESS

A huge part of attracting new businesses and industries is location, available land and affordability. Effingham is an ideal location for many types of industries and has been able to develop areas of the City to accommodate growth for large-scale industry.

LOCATION

Effingham is strategically situated at the intersection of Interstates 57 and 70. This provides the area with direct access to large metropolitan areas including St. Louis, Chicago and Indianapolis. Effingham is at the crossroad of the north/south Canadian National Railroad as well as the east/west CSX Transportation Railroad and incorporates the local Shortline Effingham Railroad. Effingham County also operates a regional airport which enhances the access opportunities to the City and its surrounding areas.

AVAILABLE LAND

Effingham's rural nature provides for large development areas with close proximity to the downtown area and housing. The City has several commercial and industrial areas that have been identified for growth. These areas can accommodate various sizes of development. The City can incentivize growth and development in these areas.



BUSINESS DISTRICTS

The City's five Business Districts were established by implementing a 1% sales tax increase within each district. Funds collected through this initiative are then used to incentivize business development and support critical infrastructure projects within the district. This type of financial mechanism helps to maintain roads, build sidewalks, and ensure utilities are provided in the area. These types of improvements help make the area more attractive to business and industry.



TAX INCREMENT FINANCING

An additional way the City obtains funding for infrastructure projects is through its two TIF districts. The City's two TIF districts include the Central Redevelopment Project Area, and the South-Central Industrial Project Area. Revenue from TIF Districts can be used to redevelop properties, construct public infrastructure, site work, building rehabilitation, and demolition.



ENTERPRISE ZONE

The City's enterprise zone is a unique mechanism that utilizes tax abatement for industrial, commercial and residential purposes. When developing within the zone, projects can qualify for a sales tax exemption on all permanently fixed building materials. Commercial projects can receive a three-year property tax abatement on the increase to the base while industrial projects can receive a seven-year abatement. New Single-family homes can receive a five-year abatement while new multi-family units can receive a three-year abatement.

CITY ASSISTANCE

The City is dedicated to helping grow and retain business and industry and has evolved in recent years and is a tremendous resource for development opportunities. Staff are available to both businesses and homeowners to help navigate the complexities associated with the various funding mechanisms and grant opportunities. For many private, state, and federal funding sources matching dollars are required and the TIF and Business Districts may be utilized in these instances.

REGIONAL ASSISTANCE

Other regional organizations also assist in the growth and retention of business and industry. Such groups include the Chamber of Commerce, South Central Illinois Regional Planning and Development Commission and Effingham County Regional Growth Alliance.

BUSINESS RETENTION

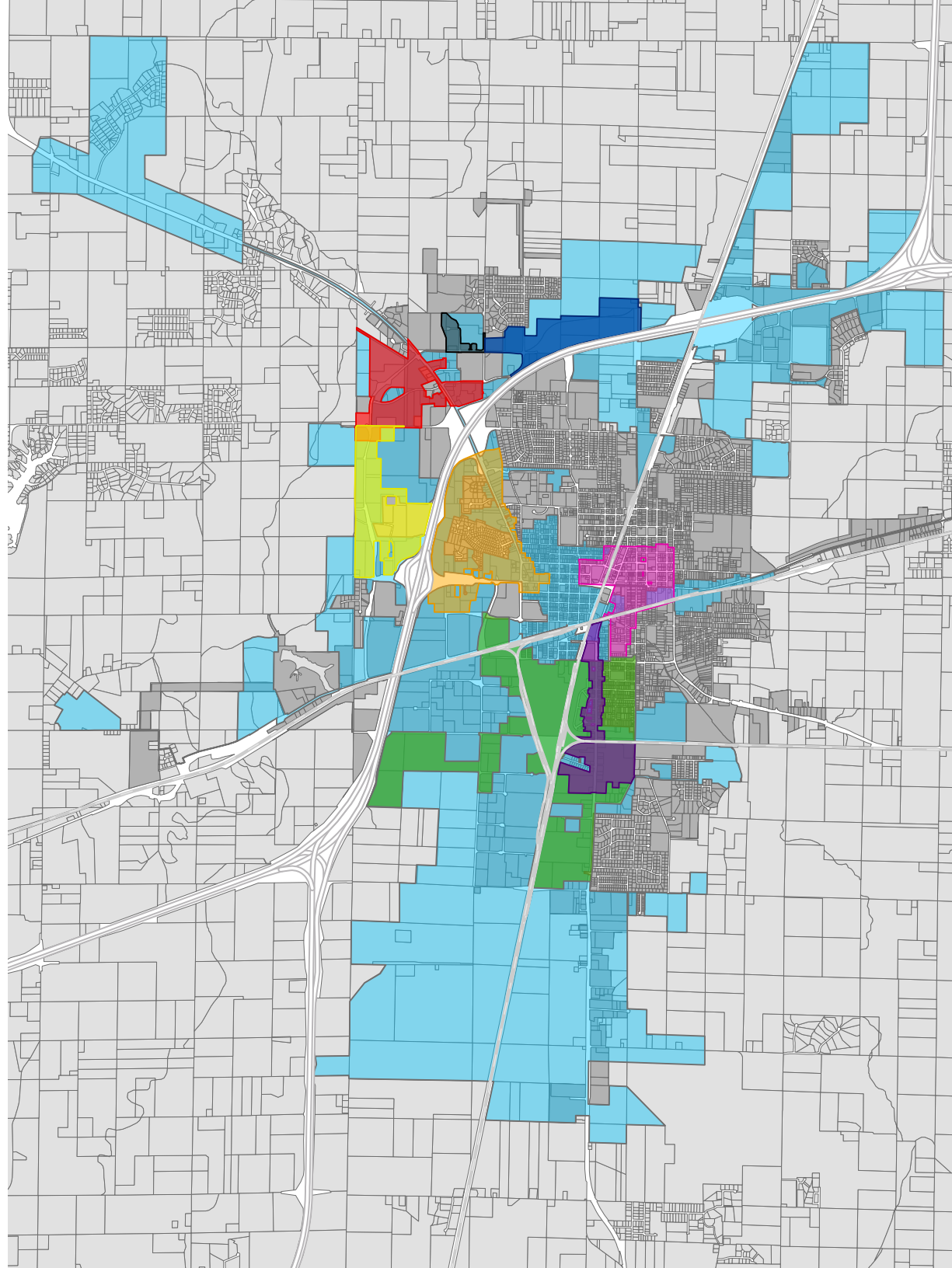
In addition to attracting new business and industry the City is focused on retaining the companies that already contribute to the City's thriving economy. Broadly speaking, the City can focus on providing a high quality of life for the community's businesses to ensure they stay in the area. A high quality of life is discussed frequently throughout this plan and encompasses everything from providing greater housing choice to developing recreational opportunities.

ENTERPRISE ZONE & TIF

-  Enterprise Zone
-  Central TIF
-  Industrial TIF

BUSINESS DISTRICTS

-  South Banker
-  Triangle
-  Northwest
-  Ford Avenue
-  Interstate North



BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 9

ED.9 Support commercial and industrial retention, growth and development in business districts and along commercial corridors to promote Effingham as a business and industry destination.

- ED.9.1 Encourage regional commercial development to cluster at major arterial street intersections and at the interchanges to efficiently serve the needs of the traveling public.
- ED.9.2 Encourage commercial development in rural areas to small-scale sales and services that directly assist and serve agricultural and rural interests.
- ED.9.3 Actively recruit quality retailers to meet community needs.

GOAL 10

ED.10 Modify land use classifications and bulk standards within zoning regulations and adhere to best practices in heavy industrial areas. Consider defining an implementing the M-1, M-2 and M-3 zoning districts.

- ED.10.1 Encourage the development of neighborhood retail sales and services to be clustered to serve adjacent residential development and away from industrial areas.
- ED.10.2 Buffer heavy industrial area from high visibility corridors with business parks and other developments that project a more attractive image of Effingham.
- ED.10.3 Maintain an efficient network of industrial streets providing access to major arterials, I-57/I-70 Corridor, railroads and the Airport.
- ED.10.4 Expand industrial opportunities near Dutch Lane, Route 45 (South of the Airport), and Raney Street.

GOAL 11

ED.11 Attract a diverse array of commercial and industrial businesses that strengthen the sustainability of the regional economy. Primarily attracting those businesses with environmental awareness.



PART 4

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE

Effingham's workforce is a critical component to the success of its various businesses and industries. A thriving workforce requires a multitude of assets to sustain itself, including ample housing stock and access to employment, but also less apparent resources, such as attainable daycare and continuing educational opportunities. The City's public schools, private schools and community college are key to building an educated and skilled workforce. Creating a community where graduating high-school students either want to stay in Effingham or return once they've gone on to receive a higher education plays an important role in the future of Effingham's workforce. The community also supports the technical trades as a vital community asset.

VISION

Effingham is an innovator, providing the skills and knowledge necessary for future opportunities.

EFFINGHAM SCHOOLS

The Effingham School District was originally created in 1948 when the area schools consolidated into Unit 40. The district currently encompasses approximately 127 square miles serving the City and surrounding rural areas. The district operates Effingham High School, Effingham Junior High School, Central Elementary; Southside Elementary; Eastside Elementary, and the Early Childhood Center. The district also operates the Little Hearts Early Childhood Center which provides daycare and preschool learning.

Enrollment in Unit 40 has remained steady, with slight increases in the last several years, with approximately 2,300 students in 2025. The district is governed by a seven-member board of directors who are elected by the community to set policy and direction for the district. The school district is one of the larger employers in the City with approximately 450 employees to carry out the task of operating the business of educating students at the highest level. This includes approximately 35 staff members at the Little Hearts Daycare / Preschool Building.

In addition to the public school system, Effingham has two private school systems offering elementary school and one high school. Sacred Heart Elementary and St Anthony's Elementary both serve students in grades k-8. St Anthony's High School serves students in grades 9-12. Discovery and Montessori private schools are also growing in population in the City limits.

Many of the school facilities, both public and private were built in the mid to late 1900s and while there have been many upgrades and repairs done over the years, efforts are underway to ensure students are prepared for the challenges of the 21st century. Unit 40's Strategic Plan outlines six areas of focus including: Facilities; Finance; Safety; Communication; Achievement/Curriculum; and Technology. The facility plan includes centrally locating Pre-K through 5th grade facilities and making all Pre-K facilities state of the art learning centers. This emphasis on

early childhood education is a critical component to the success of the middle schools and high schools.

Willenborg Street is the line between Unit 40 and Unit 50 Teutopolis Schools. There are some in the City limits that are Unit 50 schools.

CUSD 40 FORWARD

CUSD 40 Forward is a community-led initiative to modernize, consolidate, and better align school facilities with the educational, safety, and support needs of students and staff. The plan brings together parents, teachers, administrators, and local stakeholders to envision the future of Effingham's schools. A key objective is the potential creation of a centrally located Pre-K through 5th Grade school and upgrading all buildings into state-of-the-art learning environments.

To support this, the district partnered with BLDD Architects to conduct both a Physical Needs Assessment and a Functional Assessment. These studies found that while facilities are generally well-maintained, many are nearing the end of their useful life. Nearly \$19 million in physical improvements are projected over the next decade, especially at the Early Learning Center. Functionally, issues such as inadequate space, safety concerns, and learning environment disruptions—particularly in elementary schools spread across four buildings—highlight the need for consolidation.

Modernizing school facilities is critical as the district faces rising demand for specialized programs, including English Language Learning, special education, mental health services, and advanced STEM/vocational Tracks, FFA and Industrial Arts. These programs require flexible, secure, and supportive spaces—something current facilities often cannot provide. In some cases, services are delivered in hallways or converted spaces due to capacity limitations.



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

Quality of School System

Community opinions on the quality of Effingham schools.

GOOD/EXCELLENT

63%

FAIR

26%

POOR/VERY POOR

10%

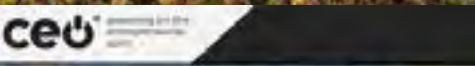
What the community is saying....

"We need the type of jobs that will keep youth here. Not more factory jobs that only stick around until the tax incentives are gone. We have no reason for most of these kids to stay. Encourage trade schools for those who aren't able to afford college. More classes through local colleges at Kluthe Center."

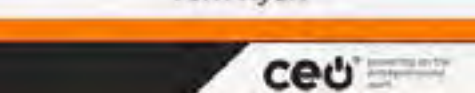
"We have good schools, but do need some educational and morale improvements."

"An asset to our community would be the potential of the 1% school improvement sales tax. Visitors to our community would do a huge part of funding our public schools facility upgrades."

"The biggest asset in Effingham is the great school system. Small town mindset with big(ish) town opportunities."



Lake Sara Forever
Tom Ryan



To help fund improvements, the district proposes a County School Facilities Sales Tax of up to one percent on certain retail purchases. The measure, which requires voter approval, has appeared on the ballot four times—most recently in 2024, when it was narrowly defeated.

In the context of this Comprehensive Plan, school reconfiguration and consolidation could significantly affect land use and transportation in Effingham. CUSD 40 should coordinate closely with the City and County to ensure that new facilities enhance, rather than disrupt, existing neighborhoods. Centralized campuses may improve transportation efficiency but could also introduce traffic issues and reduce walkability for families near current schools. In particular, siting new schools south of the railroad tracks should be carefully considered, as most population centers and community assets are located north of the tracks, and the Banker Street corridor currently lacks a grade-separated crossing.

CEO PROGRAM

The Effingham County CEO (Creating Entrepreneurial Opportunities) program is a year-long course for high school juniors and seniors that immerses students in real-world business and entrepreneurship. Students meet daily at local businesses, visit over 40 companies, and learn directly from guest speakers and mentors. The program focuses on 21st-century skills like problem-solving, communication, and self-motivation, culminating in each student launching their own business. Funded by local investors, the CEO program strengthens community ties and fosters a culture of innovation among youth.

EFFINGHAM FFA (Future Farmers of America)

In late 2025, the Effingham FFA officially returned to EHS. Years in the making with dedication and leadership of many, the longtime goal of Unit 40 and the agriculture industry to open the doors to statewide leadership conferences, competitions, scholarships and hands on learning experiences will benefit the Effingham community.

CTEC

Construction Trades Education Curriculum (CTEC) is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to teaching students the basics of construction trades. With the slogan, “Building Foundations on the Future,” CTEC has been producing a more well-developed workforce and has ensured businesses receive qualified job candidates, which in turn assists the local economy.

REGIONAL HEALTH OCCUPATIONS PROGRAM

The Regional Health Occupations Program is run through Lake Land College and provides opportunities for high school juniors and seniors to explore the world of healthcare. As a hands-on, career-oriented program, they provide students with knowledge, skills, and credentials needed to succeed in healthcare careers.

CORE ACADEMY

Creating Opportunities for Regional Employment (CORE) is an organization serving junior high and high school students as well as current professionals. Courses introduce students to local career pathways in high demand fields such as agriculture, transportation and technology. CORE Academy is partnering with Lake Land College to offer additional programming at the new Effingham Technology Center.

The organization partners with 14 school districts across 5 counties. Its focus is on supporting the businesses and industries in the region to develop a pipeline of highly skilled workers which helps the local economy attract a strong workforce as well as provide incentives for students to remain in the area.

LAKE LAND COLLEGE

Founded in 1966, Lake Land College has been serving the Effingham community since its inception. With a campus in Mattoon, Illinois and an extension center in Effingham, the College offers technical, transfer, adult education and workforce training programs. In 1995, Lake Land built the Kluthe Center in Effingham and 30 years later expanded its footprint with the Effingham Technology Center.

EFFINGHAM TECHNOLOGY CENTER: Strengthening Effingham's Workforce Pipeline

Lake Land College's long-standing commitment to Effingham entered a new chapter in 2025 with the opening of the Effingham Technology Center—an investment that strengthens the regional workforce, supports business growth, and reinforces Effingham's role as a hub for education, training, and innovation.

For decades, Lake Land College has served the Effingham community by providing accessible, career-focused education for residents and employers. As workforce demands evolved, the College expanded its local presence to better align academic programs, customized training, and business services with regional economic priorities. The Effingham Technology Center represents the next phase of that strategic commitment.

Acquired in 2023 and transformed from office space into a modern academic facility, the 100,000-square-foot center reflects a targeted investment in workforce development. Intentionally-created learning environments support in-demand careers and provide employers with a strong pipeline of skilled talent. The facility includes flexible classroom space, a high-tech science wet lab, advanced healthcare training areas—including nursing simulation, physical therapist assistant, and massage therapy labs—an Innovation Center featuring 3D printers and virtual reality tools, and a professional recording studio. These resources equip students with industry-relevant skills and credentials needed to succeed in high-demand fields.



Beyond instruction, the center functions as a collaborative hub for workforce and business development. It is the first permanent home of Creating Opportunities for Regional Employment (CORE), which offers free dual credit and career exploration opportunities for local high school students. A satellite location of the Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Eastern Illinois University's Lumpkin College of Business also provides free advising and affordable training for entrepreneurs and small business owners. The Center complements Lake Land College's broader partnerships in Effingham, including the Center for Business and Industry (CBI).

Through CBI, employers have access to customized training, apprenticeships, upskilling and reskilling programs, leadership development, safety training, and continuing education tailored to their workforce needs—helping businesses remain competitive while strengthening the local talent pipeline.

In a unique public-private collaboration, Patterson Companies—the building's original owners—continue to operate from the lower level, maintaining their presence in Effingham while supporting workforce readiness and regional growth.

Lake Land's purchase of the Center from Patterson is just one of the innovative partnerships that have fueled the College's success. Since its inception as a community college in 1966, Lake Land has been committed to serving East Central Illinois with accessible opportunities for workforce training, transfer and professional development that help individuals achieve economic mobility through education and training.

Following its grand opening in July 2025, Lake Land welcomed its first students to the Effingham Technology Center that fall. Today, it serves a diverse population, including high school dual credit students, degree-seeking learners, adult education and GED students, incumbent workers, and future healthcare professionals—each gaining skills that translate directly into local employment opportunities.

The Effingham Technology Center exemplifies how education, industry, and community partnerships can drive economic vitality. By aligning academic programs, business services, and workforce training with employer demand, Lake Land College and the City of Effingham are building a sustainable foundation for long-term growth that benefits employers, residents, and the regional economy.



WORKFORCE CHALLENGES

Education is one of the biggest ways to support a local and regional workforce but there are additional ways that aren't as prevalent that may create challenges when industries are trying to bring in talent.

A community could have a long list of prospective employees but if there are no adequate housing options there will be no place for new employees to live. It is important for Effingham to consider various housing options to accommodate different levels of income as it relates to the available industries and businesses in the area. While the housing topic is its own section within the comprehensive plan it is important to consider it as a critical component of attracting a high-quality workforce.

Another consideration in providing for the needs of a high-quality workforce is affordable and available daycare options. Participants in focus groups assembled for this plan highlighted a lack of daycare options as a deterrent for young families seeking to locate or grow their families in Effingham. This is especially important in households where both parents work or in single-parent households. Employers have expressed challenges in hiring employees because they were unable to find adequate daycare options.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Overall, the quality of life throughout the community is key to attracting a skilled and sustainable workforce. This means considering the entire landscape of what the community offers from housing to educational opportunities and even recreation and amenities. When people see Effingham as a community where they can enjoy leisure time, raise a family, find affordable housing and maintain employment they are more likely to stay in the City.



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

Childcare Challenges

Available and affordable childcare is essential to a healthy and sustainable community. Having childcare choices for parents and guardians allows for dual incomes and creates a stronger workforce. Similarly, it eases the burden on single-parent households which do not have the option for at home care with a parent. A strong workforce increases buying power, which in turn, bolsters local economies.

However, according to data provided by the State of Illinois, over the past decade the State has experienced a 33% decline in daycare providers. However, rural areas have been hit even harder with the State reporting that about 70% of Illinoisans live in a “childcare desert,” an area with a severe lack of available options for childcare. These childcare deserts are more prevalent in rural areas than urban, forcing unique challenges for communities like Effingham.

The impacts to a lack of available childcare are numerous. The lack of childcare supply increases the demand, which increases the cost. These higher costs have forced parents and guardians to make tough financial choices. In many rural instances, parents travel many miles for childcare providers. This costs them even more in both time and gas money.

Additionally, childcare tends to follow traditional work hours by being open from around 7:00 a.m. to about 5:30 p.m. However, in many rural communities, much of the workforce is employed by the industrial sector where shift work occurs. Those working the 2nd or 3rd shift can have an even harder time finding childcare in these “non-traditional” work hours providing additional complications to the issue.

While the State regulates childcare facilities (licenser, permits, etc.), the City can play a role by ensuring they do not create more barriers and by supporting the development of facilities as they become available.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 11

ED.11 Ensure the School District and additional educational opportunities are supported through proper funding and resources while encouraging growth.

- ED.11.1 Actively cooperate and work with the Chamber of Commerce, the Schools, Lake Land College, and area business and industry to encourage training programs to help the labor force maintain the latest technical skills needed.
- ED.11.2 Assess where assistance can be provided when pursuing facility development or increasing educational opportunities.
- ED.11.3 Promote the Effingham Community as an innovator in the continuous educational industry through informational materials and social media.
- ED.11.4 Help to connect businesses and industries to the educational opportunities available through Lake Land College and continually assess new skills and knowledge that will be needed for the future.

GOAL 12

ED.12 Provide a high-quality community environment for businesses and industries to attract and retain employees.

- ED.12.1 When pursuing housing goals ensure they are aligned with the needs of the existing and future workforce.
- ED.12.2 Support cooperation among various districts like the schools, park district and library to build and develop great educational, recreational and cultural offerings to improve overall quality of life.
- ED.12.3 Encourage development of new daycare options and ensure there are no additional limitations beyond those enforced by the state.





COMMUNITY SERVICES & UTILITIES

in this section:

Public Safety

Services & Utilities

Community services are fundamental to quality of life in Effingham. Our schools, libraries, public safety, and programming are among many of the reasons why people choose to call Effingham home. Ensuring these services are maintained at the highest quality - and prioritized to address future needs - is critical to maintaining and thriving and growing community.



PART 1

PUBLIC SAFETY

The City of Effingham provides public safety services to the community through fire, police, ambulance, and emergency services. These services are critical to ensuring the safety and welfare of residents and the daily increase of population due to the local workforce and interstate traffic. As the County seat of Effingham County, the City is also the home of the County jail, Sheriff's Office and the Emergency Services Disaster Agency. This section will provide insight into the current status of City services and outline the goals and objectives for ensuring reliable and consistent services now and into the future.

VISION

The City of Effingham maintains efficient and effective public safety services.

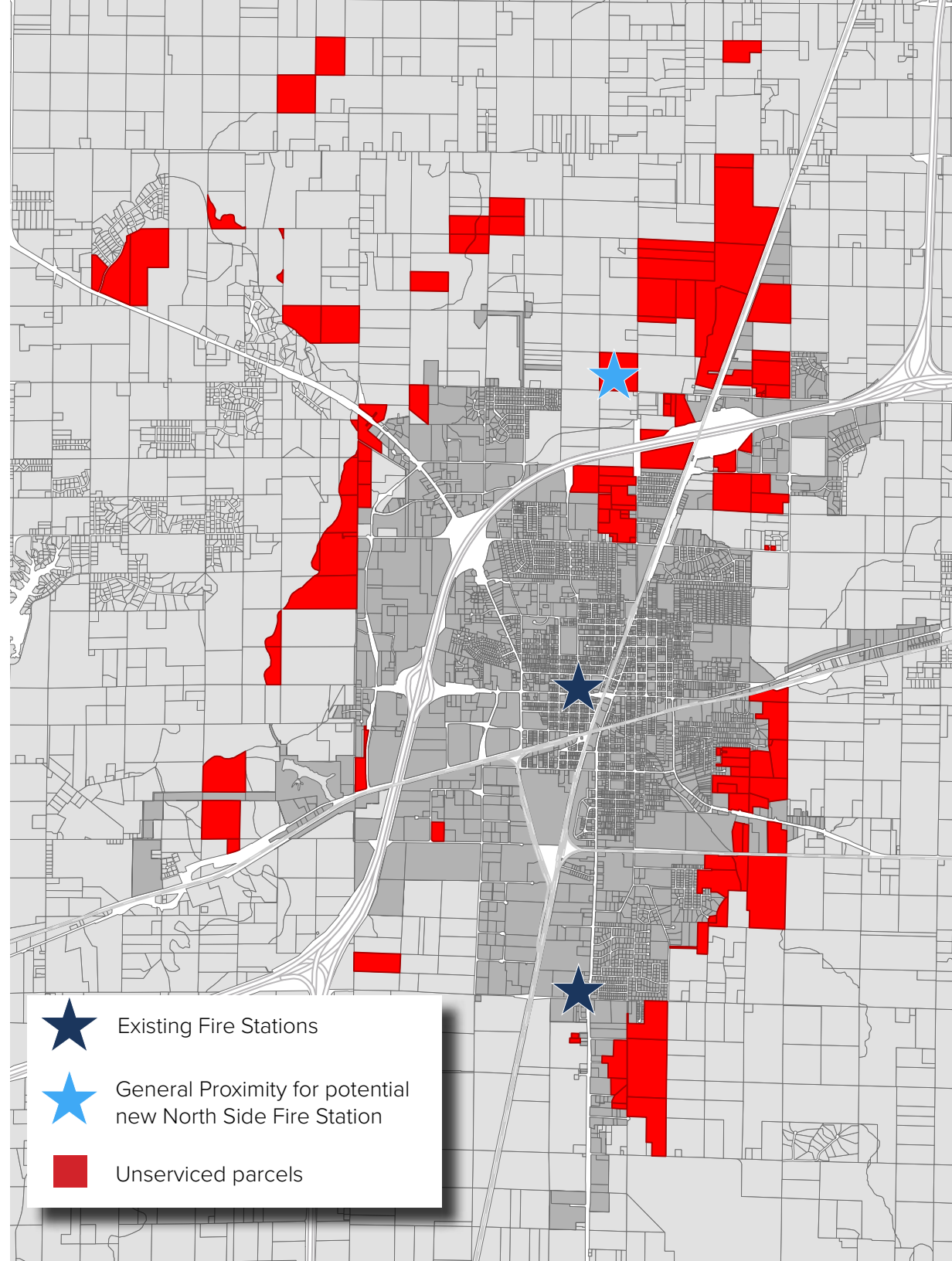
FIRE AND RESCUE

The Effingham Fire Department is responsible for the City's fire and rescue services. The department operates out of two facilities within the City limits. Central Fire Station is located in the center of the City while Fire Station #2 is located on the south end of the City on Jaycee Avenue. Throughout the County, various other municipalities and Fire Protection Districts are responsible for fire and rescue services outside of the City limits. However, there are some areas around the City that are undesignated and therefore are not serviced by a specific district. While the City and the Districts can bill landowners for calls to these areas it is in the best interests of the City and the surrounding communities to reduce the amount of unserved locations.

Fire Department Staffing, Facilities, and Apparatus

Staffing, facilities, equipment, and vehicles are all critical components in ensuring the Fire Department operates efficiently and effectively. The Effingham Fire Department currently employs 17 full-time personnel, including the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief, along with 16 paid-on-call firefighters who supplement staffing as needed. Based on the City's current population, this equates to approximately 1.4 full-time firefighters per 1,000 residents, which provides important context for long-range public safety planning.

As Effingham continues to grow and experiences increased development density, call volume, and service complexity, future staffing levels will need to be evaluated to ensure emergency response capabilities keep pace with community needs. National fire service planning benchmarks indicate that communities with expanding populations and increased risk profiles often require higher staffing levels over time to maintain response performance and service reliability.



Fire Department apparatus and equipment are distributed between two fire stations to support citywide response coverage. Station #1 houses a 1,000-gallon engine, a heavy rescue engine, and a 100-foot platform aerial, while Station #2 houses an additional engine and a 77-foot ladder truck. At the Central Fire Station, upgrades and expansion to accommodate manning, equipment and vehicles must be considered carefully because it has a variety of impacts on the community. A new north-side station should also be considered and must be strategically located to serve the City, including the interstates.

The City takes a proactive approach to fleet and equipment sustainability through long-term capital planning and by maintaining an up-to-date Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Aligning future staffing, facilities, and apparatus planning with community growth will help prevent service gaps, avoid deferred investment, and maintain the City’s achieved ISO Class 2 rating. It is very important not only to the Fire Department, but also the Community to maintain the ISO 2 rating as development, density and service demands increase.

Fire Stations

At the Central Fire Station, upgrades and expansion to accommodate manning, equipment and vehicles must be considered carefully because it has a variety of impacts on the community. A new north-side station should also be considered and must be strategically located with adequate staffing and dedicated apparatus to properly support the station as growth continues in that area along with calls for service on Interstate 57/70.

POLICE

The Effingham Police Department is currently made up of 27 sworn officers, 10 dispatchers, 4 administrative staff, including the Police Chief and Deputy Chief, as well as 1 part-time sworn officer and 4 part-time dispatchers.

Continued growth throughout the City will generate the need for additional patrol officers. To effectively serve residents the department estimates that it needs 2.4-3.0 full time officers per 1,000 residents. In the same light, the City of Effingham is unique as it see an influx of thousands of people a day with their employment opportunities as well as the transient nature of the highway interchanges. Police protection should be considered with annexations and major new residential development. This will give Police an opportunity to reallocate patrol sectors and manpower in order to provide adequate protection.

The department maintains strong relationships between State Police, County Sheriff and other municipal departments. In addition, support services are needed, particularly in data management which includes filling, saving and properly redacting body and dash cam videos in the case of Freedom of Information Act Requests (FOIA). In 2024, there were over 300 FOIA requests made to the department. In addition to support services, the City should begin planning for additional evidence storage facilities which is likely to become a growing need over the next 10-15 years. The City has 6 auto license plate readers in the community which have led to finding missing persons, recovering stolen vehicles, and finding persons of interest. The department provides the school district with a dedicated school resource officer as well.



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

The community overall has a positive perception of public safety services within the City. Over 80% of residents feel the City’s fire and police services are of good or excellent quality.

In terms of funding, a majority of the community would like to see no change to funding of the fire and police departments however there is still over 20% of residents that would like to see additional spending on fire and police services.

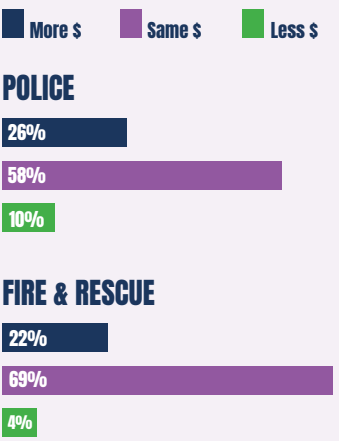
Service Quality

Community opinions on the quality of public safety services



City Spending

Community insights into funding levels for public safety services



REGIONAL SAFETY SERVICES

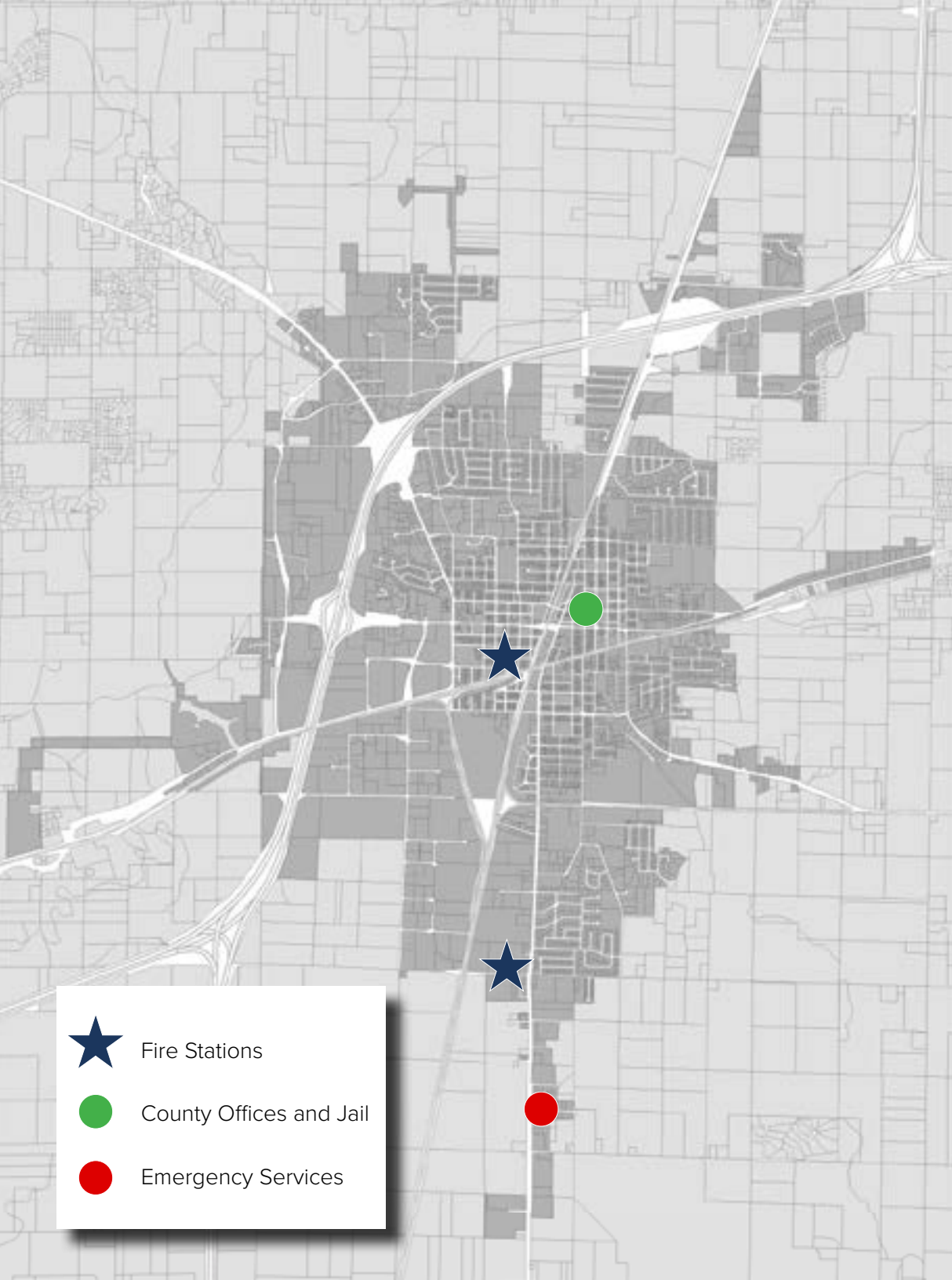
Due to the City being the County seat there are some shared services and facilities. The City's police station is located in downtown Effingham, adjacent to the County building which houses the Sheriff, County Jail and County Coroner. The County has a 60-bed capacity jail. The jail is a 20-year old facility that will need updates to meet current standards in the near future.

For mortuary services, there are 3 spots for the deceased at St. Anthony Memorial Hospital and the City and County coordinate with local funeral homes for additional capacity. The County has acquired and opened a new facility for the County Coroner to operate out of that includes a morgue for additional capacity, a private viewing room for family members as well as freezer space for long-term storage. If needed, a refrigerated trailer may be utilized when capacity is an issue.

Ambulance services in the area are operated through a contract between a provider and the County. Oversight of these services is maintained by the County's Ambulance Oversight Committee, which meets regularly to review performance and ensure accountability.

Effingham County provides a Dive Rescue Team for the area that consists of 12- 20 volunteer public safety divers and shore responders. Volunteers are trained by Dive Rescue International. The team operates a drone and 3 boats. They provide mutual aid with Shelby County.

The Emergency Telephone System Board (ETSB) is responsible for the implementation and operation of the Enhanced 911 system for Effingham County. The ETSB is in partnership with the Effingham County Sheriff's Department and the Effingham City Police Department.

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- A map of Effingham County, Georgia, showing the locations of regional safety services. The map is a grayscale aerial view with a white grid overlay. A legend in the bottom-left corner identifies four types of locations: Fire Stations (blue star), County Offices and Jail (green circle), and Emergency Services (red circle). There are two blue stars, one green circle, and one red circle marked on the map. The blue stars are located in the central and lower-central parts of the county. The green circle is in the upper-central part. The red circle is in the lower-right part.
- ★ Fire Stations
 - County Offices and Jail
 - Emergency Services

PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1

CS.1 **Appropriately provide funding for public safety services to address current population, external safety considerations and future growth.**

- CS.1.1 Evaluate and plan for location and future staffing needs for an additional fire station on the north side.
- CS.1.2 Review the costs and consider the addition of police officer positions or a reorganization that would provide additional police presence at community events requiring City services.
- CS.1.3 Maintain open communication with the fire and police department regarding potential annexations or large-scale developments that could result in a large increase in population.
- CS.1.4 Consider police staffing to account for unique demands and our locality.
- CS.1.5 Consider firefighter staffing for the total service population (residents, daytime workers, hotel guests, and transient traffic and performance-based standards like NFPA 1710.
- CS.1.6 Consider increasing support staffing and services to ensure compliance with required state and federal laws.
- CS.1.7 Consider HAZMAT team for local support.
- CS.1.8 Consider funding to create a full-time EMS position.
- CS.1.9 Identify resources and opportunities to assist in the growth of the Emergency Operations Center and the possibility of acquiring a mobile communications unit. It would be available for both Police and Fire and would serve as a mobile dispatch center if needed.
- CS.1.10 Ensure the useful life of police and fire department vehicles are tracked and funds are planned in advance to replace vehicles when necessary



GOAL 2

CS.2 Consistently review and consider needs for new facilities as the City grows in population and in potential square mileage through annexation.

- CS.2.1 Consider upgrades of Central Station and an additional location where services can be expanded - Ideally near Fourth Street and Rickelman Avenue.
- CS.2.2 Consider redevelopment of the fire department training facility and include facilities for police training.
- CS.2.3 Consider expansion of the short-term municipal holding facility to address future needs.
- CS.2.4 Work with County to Ensure the jail is included in the County's capital improvement plan to accommodate the upgrades and repairs needed for the facility.
- CS.2.5 Ensure the City's Capital Improvement plan is reviewed and updated frequently to make sure projects are being considered when necessary.

GOAL 3

CS.3 Maintain and grow healthy partnerships with public and private organizations that provide additional public safety services within or around the City.

- CS.3.1 Strategically reduce the amount of "non- serviced" fire protection areas around the City to ensure there are no gaps in service.
- CS.3.2 Work with the fire department to encourage EMR / EMT training for all firefighters.
- CS.3.3 Partner with the Sheriff's office to continue existing or establish new services that address unique challenges the area faces including, but not limited to, the County's rescue dive team.
- CS.3.4 Identify resources available in the County and coordinate with Public Works Departments for equipment sharing in emergencies.
- CS.3.5 Continue to be a member of IPWMAN mutual aid services for Public Works.
- CS.3.6 Pursue agreements with other departments and communities to provide shelters, supplies and resources for the greater community when needed.
- CS.3.7 Develop a volunteering program for community members to train and assist with emergency responses.
- CS.3.8 Frequently evaluate the contracts for EMS services and ensure services are being provided appropriately.

CS.3.9 Work with EMS contractors to support resources and opportunities to train and grow medic staff, including the general public.

CS.3.10 Continue to work with the County to provide City and County 911 services.

CS.3.11 Continue to partner with funeral homes to provide mortuary services when morgue capacity is at its limit.





PART 2

SERVICES & UTILITIES

Effingham offers a comprehensive array of community services and utilities that play a vital role in enhancing residents' quality of life. The City provides safe, potable water sourced from Lake Sara, the Little Wabash River, and other local resources such as the Kaskaskia River via Holland Regional Water. The City Water Treatment Plant has treatment capacity of up to six million gallons per day. Wastewater collection and treatment is managed through a municipal facility designed for a maximum flow of nine million gallons per day. Both plants have expansion capabilities on their respective sites. Effingham benefits from a high-speed fiber optic network, supporting advanced telecommunications and internet services from multiple providers. Ameren Illinois is the provider of all gas service and a majority of electric service with Norris Electric serving portions of the City and surrounding area. This comprehensive service and utility framework is integral to the City's ongoing development and commitment to providing essential services to its community.

VISION

Effingham is a connected and resilient community where accessible, high-quality services and utilities enhance the well-being and quality of life for every resident.

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Effingham offers a diverse range of community services that support well-being, safety, and quality of life for residents of all ages through accessible health, education, public safety, and social service programs.

CITY AND COUNTY SERVICES

Effingham's municipal and County governments provide various services to enhance community life. The Public Works department is responsible for maintenance of critical infrastructure, including roads, water and sewer mains, stormwater, sidewalks, City buildings, City cemetery, Bliss Park and other public spaces. The department ensures the delivery of clean, safe water to residents and the proper collection and treatment of wastewater. The City utilizes a community alert system to allow residents to receive real-time updates on road work, weather emergencies, and other important notices.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Effingham Public Library serves as a cornerstone of community learning, engagement, and access to information. With a collection of over 50,000 items and annual circulation surpassing 250,000, the library offers a robust selection of books, digital resources, and multimedia materials for the education and entertainment of residents. Beyond traditional lending services, the library plays a vital role in community support through adult literacy programs, English as Second Language (ESL) nights, early childhood reading initiatives, technology workshops, and job search assistance.

In 2015, the library relocated to a new facility at 200 N. Third Street, re-purposing the former Fifth Third Bank

building. This modern library environment consists of 27,000 square feet of interior office space and complete with circulation areas, reading rooms, book stacks, workspaces, study zones, and meeting areas.

The facility also functions as a community outreach center, hosting events, collaborating with local case managers to connect residents to essential services, and operating as an emergency shelter during severe weather. With a strong commitment to inclusivity and lifelong learning, the Effingham Public Library continues to evolve as a vibrant hub for education, cultural enrichment, and public service.

SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES

C.E.F.S. Economic Opportunity Corporation is a nonprofit community action agency serving the City, Effingham County, and surrounding counties. Its mission is to assist economically and socially disadvantaged individuals to help them achieve self-sufficiency. The organization provides services such as Head Start and Early Childhood Education which offers early learning opportunities for children aged 3 to 5. They offer housing counseling and assistance, as well as outreach programs, and energy assistance and weatherization.

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Springfield operates a regional office in Effingham and provides shelter and abuse and emergency services. Heartland Human Services provides mental health services, including counseling and support for individuals dealing with mental health issues and substance abuse. Effingham also hosts other service organizations such as ARC Community Support Systems, FISH, Meals on Wheels and Crisis Nursery of Effingham County just to mention a few of the many organizations. These organizations, play a vital role in supporting the diverse needs of Effingham's residents and fostering a compassionate and resilient community.



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

Service Quality

Community opinions on the quality of public services.

Public Library

87%

Garbage Collection

80%

Public Schools

64%

Stormwater Management

52%

Cable/Telecommunication

50%

Snow Removal

50%

Yard Waste Disposal

20%

Recycling Program

11%

UTILITIES

The City provides the main utility services of water treatment and distribution and sewer collection and treatment along with stormwater. The available electric, gas services and phone / internet / cable services are offered to residents through private providers along with refuse collection.

WATER SERVICE

Effingham's water services are managed by the Effingham Water Department, which supplies clean and safe drinking water to the community. The primary water sources are Lake Sara, the Little Wabash River, and the Kaskaskia River. CIPS Lake serves as a 'holding basin' from the other sources. The department maintains a water treatment facility with a peak capacity of 6 million gallons per day, ensuring consistent water quality and supply.

SEWER SERVICE

The City of Effingham's Public Works Department oversees the municipal sewer system, ensuring the safe collection and treatment of wastewater. The department is responsible for constructing and maintaining sewer mains and related infrastructure as well as ensuring all state and federal regulations are met. For properties utilizing septic systems, several local companies offer services such as septic tank pumping, hydro jetting, sewer line cleaning, and portable sanitation solutions.

ELECTRIC SERVICE

Effingham operates within a deregulated electricity market, allowing residents to choose their electricity supplier. Ameren Illinois serves as the primary utility company, managing the delivery infrastructure and maintenance of the electrical grid. Consumers can select from various energy providers, each of whom offer a range of plans, including fixed-rate options and renewable energy solutions.

A review of the electrical grid is in progress and preliminary results show a deficiency in some areas. Government and industry leaders will need to work closely with Ameren to improve the grid.

CELLULAR SERVICE

With new and advancing technology along with increased cellular service use for not only calling and texting, but internet access - band width usage, the need for enhanced coverage by updated equipment and increased tower locations will be needed. The City will need to work with cellular companies on tower locations.



INTERNET SERVICE

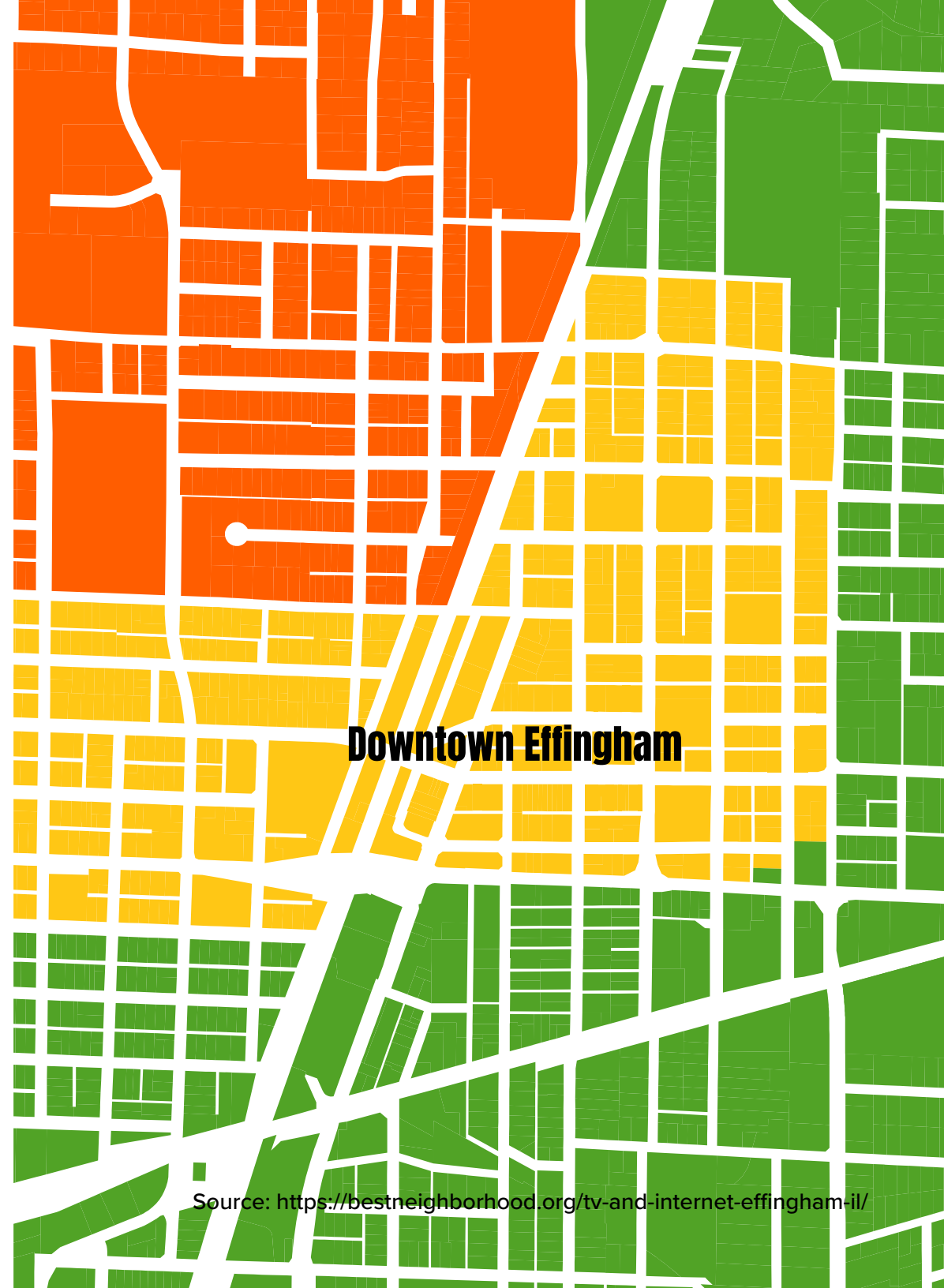
The City boasts a diverse array of internet service providers, catering to varying needs and preferences. Major providers include Consolidated Communications, American Fiber, Mediacom and Illinois Fiber Connect / Wabash Communications, all offering high-speed fiber-optic connections with speeds up to 1 Gbps. Wisper ISP, AT&T and other providers offering services through DSL, fixed wireless, and 5G technologies. This variety ensures the community has access to reliable and fast internet connectivity throughout the area.

INTERNET CHALLENGES

While the entire City and its surrounding area have access to fast and reliable internet, service in the downtown area could be improved to better serve the areas businesses and residents. Fiber optic networks are the fastest and most reliable, they are typically buried and offer significantly higher speeds and lower latency than traditional copper-based internet technologies like DSL or cable.

Downtown Effingham has some access to fiber optic networks, but the area is not fully covered, which results in some businesses limited to other types of services. While other services are still reliable and of high quality, bringing full coverage fiber optic internet to downtown Effingham can greatly foster economic growth, attract new businesses, and ensure they have access to high-speed, reliable connectivity that supports modern demands. Similarly, the hospital area could also benefit from improved access to fiber optic internet. High speeds and reliable service can greatly benefit educational and medical institutions.

Current Fiber Optic Internet Coverage



SERVICES & UTILITIES

COMMUNITY GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 4

CS.4 Invest in and modernize community service infrastructure—such as libraries, health facilities, and senior centers—to ensure access, long-term sustainability, and adaptability to future needs.

- CS.4.1 Pursue state and federal funding opportunities to support the renovation and expansion of community service infrastructure.
- CS.4.2 Establish technology upgrade schedules to ensure public access computers, software, and other digital tools remain current and functional.
- CS.4.3 Create community engagement processes to gather input from diverse residents on desired services, programming, and facility features.
- CS.4.4 Encourage local healthcare providers and non-profits to work with libraries, recreation centers, and senior facilities to expand health and wellness programming.
- CS.4.5 Pursue all community facilities meet ADA accessibility standards and explore enhancements that go beyond compliance to serve residents of all physical and cognitive abilities

GOAL 5

CS.5 Prioritize investments in maintaining, upgrading and expanding utility systems to meet future demands of residential, commercial and industrial development.

- CS.5.1 Develop a long-range utility infrastructure plan that aligns with projected residential, commercial and industrial growth patterns.
- CS.5.2 Coordinate utility upgrades with land use planning and economic development efforts to ensure infrastructure investments support priority growth areas.
- CS.5.3 Continue to prioritize replacement of aging infrastructure—including water mains, sewer lines, stormwater facilities and electric components—with modern, resilient systems that reduce maintenance costs and service disruptions.
- CS.5.4 Pursue funding opportunities and public-private partnerships to support utility expansion and modernization without overburdening local ratepayers.

- CS.5.5 Promote coordination among utility providers to ensure that expansion efforts are timely, cost-effective, and minimally disruptive to the community.
- CS.5.6 Establish utility performance monitoring systems to track usage, detect issues early, and ensure long-term efficiency.
- CS.5.7 Ensure the City's Capital Improvement plan is reviewed and updated frequently to make sure projects, such as Water Mains appropriately sized for Fire ISO, are being considered when necessary.
- CS.5.8 Work with Electric Utility operators on improvements to the grid.
- CS.5.9 Identify and possibly acquire locations for new cell tower.
- CS.5.10 Review cell tower aesthetic requirements to ensure skyline protection.

GOAL 6

CS.6 Adopt environmentally responsible practices and technologies to ensure long-term sustainability and resilience of utility services.

- CS.6.1 Incorporate renewable energy sources—such as solar, wind, or geothermal—into public utility operations and explore opportunities for community-scale energy projects.
- CS.6.2 Upgrade water and wastewater systems with energy-efficient pumps, leak detection technologies, and water reuse capabilities to reduce environmental impact and operating costs.
- CS.6.3 Integrate green infrastructure and sustainable utility practices, such as rain gardens, permeable pavement, and energy-efficient technologies.
- CS.6.4 Promote conservation programs that encourage residents and businesses to reduce water and energy use through available incentives, education, and smart technology.
- CS.6.5 Adopt smart grid and metering technologies to improve energy efficiency, manage demand, and provide customers with real-time usage data.
- CS.6.6 Partner with regional and state agencies to pilot innovative utility technologies and access funding for green infrastructure improvements.



TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

in this section:

Roads & Infrastructure

Public Transit

Rail & Airport

Transportation systems are the backbone of any community, getting people where they need to go. Effingham provides a robust transportation network from roadways to sidewalks, bike paths, transit and a local airport. Ensuring a safe and efficient system is an important part of the everyday lives of residents and visitors alike.



PART 1

ROADS & INFRASTRUCTURE

The City of Effingham and IDOT have made tremendous strides in creating safe access throughout the City since the 2008 comprehensive plan update. Numerous road connections have been thoroughly planned and constructed which have improved traffic flow and connections throughout the community. As Effingham plans for the future it will be important to consider where the next connections will be made as well as what improvements could be developed to ease traffic congestion and make getting from point A to point B as safe and reliable as possible for residents and visitors.

VISION

Effingham provides an efficient transportation system that prioritizes circulation, maintenance and safety for all modes of transportation.

ROAD NETWORK

Effingham local roads and transportation infrastructure are maintained by the Public Works Department. The City is also serviced by Interstate 57 /70 State and US highways IL-33, IL 32, IL 37, US 40 and US 45 with other County and Township roads. This network of roadways aims to safely and efficiently get people where they need to go.

Effingham has seen major progress in road improvements and development over the last 30 years. In the early 2000's the City pursued the development of Outer Belt West which helped to alleviate congestion on Keller Drive and provide access from US 40 (National Avenue) to Keller Drive (IL 33). The City has also built multiple road connections proposed from previous versions of the comprehensive plan including the Banker Street overpass and the Raney Street overpass, along with the realignment of Wernsing Avenue and Mansfield Drive, providing improved access from the Business Park to Fayette Avenue.

Smaller connections have been made as well, such as the connection of Charlotte Street to Avenue of Mid-America and Grove Ave from Raney Street to Maple Street. The public works department has been able to obtain multiple grants and funding opportunities for projects outlined in the previous comprehensive plan.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

Amidst so much success in the development and growth of the City's road network over the last 30 years, there remain some challenges to address over the next 20 years.

One of the City's main areas of concern is the access from the north end to the south end of the City. The main access bottleneck is the rail crossing on Banker Street, south of the overpass. This can cause major delays and is a large reason why transit access hasn't yet reached the south part of the City.

In 2018, the City conducted a traffic study of north Keller Drive, an overly congested area. The study resulted in a series of recommendations for improving traffic flow in the area as well as planning for future growth. The study recommended the City pursue planning for growth by extending Ford Avenue to Fourth Street and constructing traffic signals to improve traffic flow from the Avenue of Mid-America to Keller Drive at Damron Court.

In 2020, a feasibility study was conducted to determine potential locations for an interchange on I-57 and I-70 to the south of the City. The study was met with push-back from the community when the preferred location was established at Dutch Lane. Land owners in the area felt an interchange at this location could disrupt the rural nature of the area. However, it is worth continuing to pursue community feedback and sharing information and knowledge about the importance of developing a new interchange to the south of the City that could provide better access to the neighborhoods south of downtown and the airport for future industrial and commercial growth

It is important to look at what can be done to help improve traffic flow and connectivity in the years to come. The City should consider pursuing an Outer Belt East connection, planning for future development and incorporating new transportation safety innovations such as roundabouts. It is also important to prioritize the quality of existing road infrastructure and ensure streets are being maintained and provide safe access for all modes of transportation.



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

Transportation Investments

Community opinions on the importance of maintaining existing roadways.

VERY IMPORTANT



SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT



NEUTRAL



NOT VERY IMPORTANT



NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL



What the community is saying....

"Weaknesses: Not looking forward in time far enough to anticipate growth and having a game plan for more routes to go North/South across town. I almost never go to the North side to shop due to traffic congestion on Keller."

"Need more focus on Keller Drive traffic congestion."

"The south town train track needs an overpass!! Everyone is tired of being held up by this train stopping and backing up!!"

"Many roads have been neglected for too long. Too many spots dug out and patched creating rough conditions."

"Many existing roads need to be reconstructed rather than patching the same road failures each year."

Community Ideas

Specific comments from the community that support current planning and ideas for projects they feel will enhance Effingham's road network.

The community and the City have the same ideas for how to improve access in and around Effingham. From developing the roundabout to improving traffic flow on Keller Drive, it is clear that the City has the community in mind when making improvements. An important area of focus for the City going forward could be communicating road improvements to areas across the City. People do not seem to have a solid understanding of how or why some roads are improved while others are not. The City could benefit from having talking points on this to better inform residents of their process and ability to complete projects throughout the community.

"Not sure if just a rumor or if a roundabout would be put on 4th and Rickelman. My suggestion would be routing Ford avenue if extended to 4th into the same roundabout to make traffic flow better in that area and help divert traffic off of the residential area on Rickelman."

"Could use the roundabout at the intersection of Rickelman and 4th street and also use one on the West Outer Belt."

"Would like to see more alternate routes around Keller Drive to reduce congestion. The route 45 / I-57 interchange seems to be getting busier and more congested especially during morning, noon and 5 PM time frames."

"An area to improve is safe mobility downtown and Keller Drive shopping areas for pedestrians, especially with a growing senior citizen population."

"Keller Drive over the interstate needs additional routes to shopping and 32/33. Very congested area and will only get worse."

"Most of the City streets are in decent shape, but do need continuous quality maintenance"

"Need to extend Fayette Ave west from I 57/70 to Country Club Road. Need to improve driving surface on south Banker St. Need to improve Willow St intersection at Fayette Ave."

"Weaknesses: Focusing on parking problems vs. people walking & connecting communities to each other via safe bike lanes (Specifically, the missing mile project from T-town to Effingham) Strengths: Effingham focuses on small incremental improvements which I notice frequently."

"Fayette improvements very good! Need roads improved and sidewalks added for lower income area homes, not just for the high tax areas."

INNOVATION & DESIGN STANDARDS

The City is currently pursuing development of a roundabout at the intersection of Rickelman Avenue and Fourth Street and there are additional locations where roundabout development could be beneficial for traffic flow and safety. Many communities have incorporated roundabouts into the transportation networks and seen great success. Forward thinking communities throughout the Midwest have built roundabouts to improve traffic flow, reduce the severity of collisions, and reduce idling. One of the biggest challenges with implementing a roundabout project is push-back from motorists unfamiliar with roundabouts. As the City pursues development of roundabouts it will be important to inform the community about their benefits.

COMPLETE STREETS:

City transportation projects should prioritize the Complete Streets concept which ensures transportation accessibility to all users from pedestrian to cyclist to driver. Make provisions for city wide use of golf carts with no rules or regulations including age of driver.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The goals and objectives of this section will specify projects and directions the City can take to continue improving and enhancing the road network. In addition, this section will visually highlight the improvements that can be made on a comprehensive map. The plan includes feedback from the community and input provided by community members in transportation focus groups. It also includes projects from the previous plan that have not been completed but are still relevant to the future. Lastly, it incorporates recommendations from existing studies such as the North Keller Drive Traffic Study.

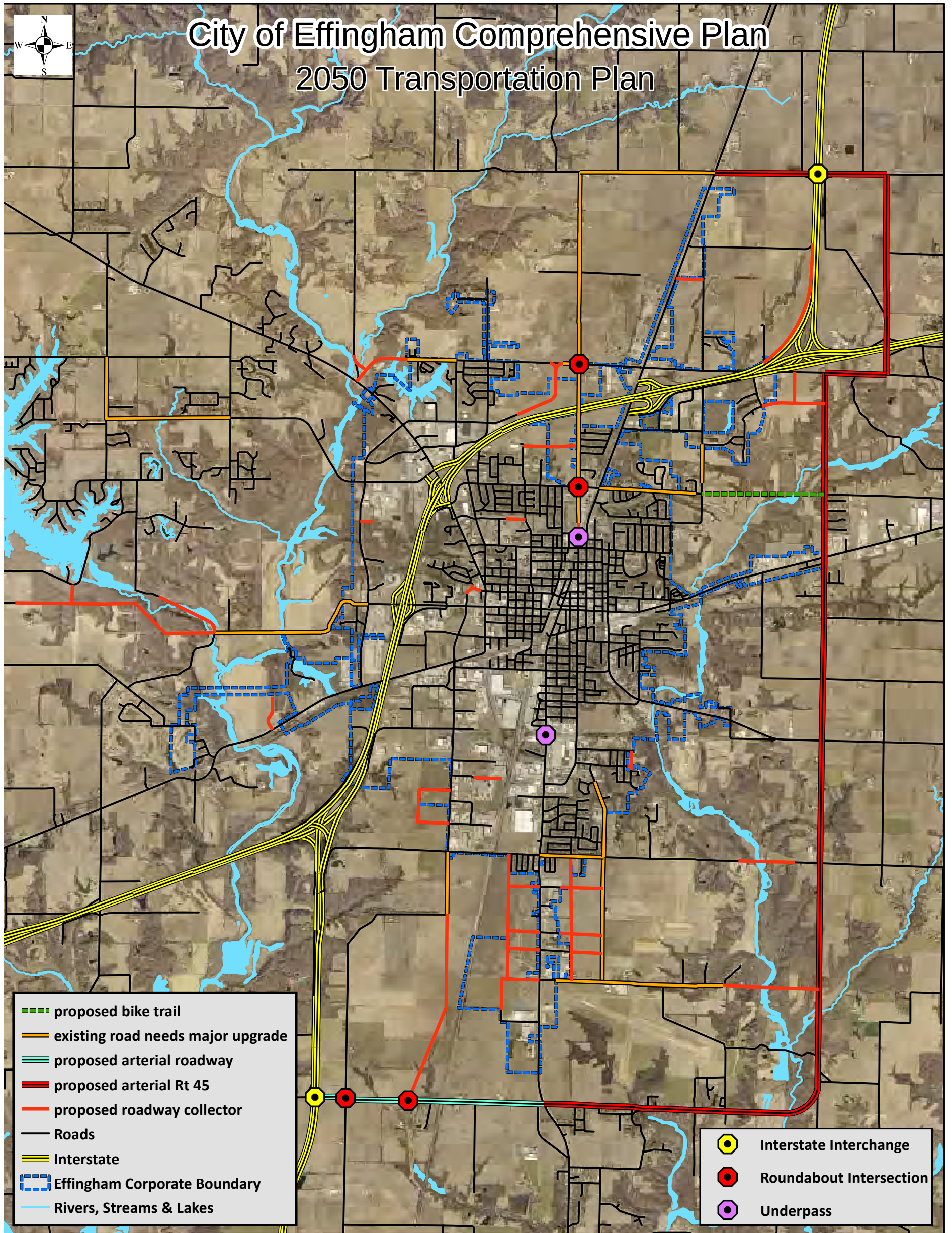
HOW TO USE THE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The map shows projects broken down into short-term and long-term plans. Short-term projects reflect those that should be prioritized within the next 10 years while long-term projects reflect those that should be prioritized within the next 10-20 years. These break downs are important due to the high cost and long length of design and planning for transportation projects. The Transportation Plan includes development of new roads as well as recommendations for traffic light installation and traffic calming measures. The purpose of the map is to aid in conversations with the community regarding transportation initiatives as well as assist with planning and funding opportunities by highlighting project priorities.



City of Effingham Comprehensive Plan

2050 Transportation Plan



ROADS & INFRASTRUCTURE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1

T.1 **Prioritize new transportation infrastructure projects that will help improve traffic flow, capacity, and safety.**

- T.1.1 Complete Ford Avenue extension to 4th Street.
- T.1.2 Complete roundabout at Rickelman Avenue and 4th Street.
- T.1.3 Complete extension of Heritage Avenue to Maple Street.
- T.1.4 Pursue development of an underpass or overpass on South Banker Street at the east-west rail crossing.
- T.1.5 Pursue potential for development of a roundabout at Evergreen and 4th Street.
- T.1.6 Continue to make enhancement of the transportation circulation system a community priority.
- T.1.7 Implement 2018 North Keller Drive traffic study recommendations that include:
 - Rickelman Avenue & North Raney Street: Revise flow of traffic so eastbound and westbound approaches are free-flow and the northbound approach is stop-controlled or traffic signal controlled.
 - Avenue of Mid-America & Damron Court: Install traffic signals. The eastbound and westbound approaches should provide one exclusive left-turn lane and through lane, and one shared through/right-turn lane. The northbound approach should provide one exclusive left-turn lane and through lane, and one exclusive right-turn lane. The southbound approach should provide one exclusive left-turn lane and one shared through/right-turn lane.



Implement 2018 N. Keller Drive traffic study recommendations cont.

N. Keller Drive & Avenue of Mid-America: The westbound approach should be changed to provide one exclusive left-turn lane and one shared through/right-turn lane. The existing split-phased signal phasing for the eastbound and westbound approaches should be changed to provide protected/permitted left-turn signal phasing. Finally, a northbound right-turn overlap phase should be provided.

Ford Avenue & N. Raney Street: Left-turn lanes should be provided on all approaches. The existing four-way stop control should be converted to a two-way stop with the N. Raney Street approaches stop-controlled and the Ford Avenue approaches free-flow.

Ford Avenue & Charlotte Street: At the completion of the Ford Avenue extension a traffic signal or roundabout should be installed at Ford Avenue & Charlotte Street.

Ford Avenue & N. 4th Street: At the completion of the Ford Avenue extension a traffic signal or roundabout should be installed at Ford Avenue and 4th Street.

GOAL 2

T.2 Plan for future growth by identifying areas where new roads or connections may be needed and begin preparing for development.

- T.2.1 Continue to pursue development of a southern interchange for I-57/I-70.
- T.2.2 Identify opportunities to develop an Outer Belt East that will connect the area around the airport to Crystal Club Road providing access to the north area of the City.
- T.2.3 Extend Jaycee Avenue to Crystal Club Road to help create a full connection for the Outer Belt East into all areas of the City.
- T.2.4 Create connections to Lake Sara via Fayette Avenue to the south and County Road 1550 to the north.
- T.2.5 Extend Evergreen Avenue to Crystal Club Road (Missing Mile Project) to open up east-west access on the northern part of the City.

GOAL 3

T.3 Ensure safe and reliable road, sidewalk and bike networks by meeting design standards and prioritizing funding for improvements and infrastructure.

- T.3.1 Revise, update or implement a Complete Streets Policy.
- T.3.2 Implement Safe Routes to School programs that combine targeted infrastructure upgrades with safety education and encouragement campaigns.
- T.3.3 Pursue sidewalk updates or development in alignment with ADA standards when completing any street reconstruction.
- T.3.4 Continually study system capacities and maintain a five-year capital improvements programs while pursuing grant and funding opportunities to complete projects.

GOAL 4

T.4 Connect existing sidewalks and bikeways to key destinations, as the community evolves, for both transportation and recreation.

- T.4.1 Upgrade key crossings and intersections— especially near schools, highways, and railroads—for improved safety and accessibility.
- T.4.2 Add wayfinding signs and pavement markings to guide users and reinforce visibility.
- T.4.3 Coordinate with IDOT and developers to incorporate bike and pedestrian improvements into planned road and land development projects.





PART 2

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Public transit is offered in the City of Effingham through Central Illinois Public Transit (CIPT). Residents have access to demand-response service that provides door-to-door public transportation throughout the City and the County. In July of 2023, CIPT launched a deviated route service in the City that provides residents with a fixed route style of service with flexibility to pick riders up at their homes or a location within a quarter mile of the route. E-Trax is a step forward towards offering a traditional fixed route service and expands opportunities for residents to travel around the City.

VISION

Residents and visitors are able to safely and efficiently travel throughout the City using public transportation.

DEMAND RESPONSE SERVICE

Central Illinois Public Transit (CIPT) operates transit service in the City of Effingham as well as throughout Effingham County. The service is a demand response model which requires advance scheduling for pick-ups and drop-offs. The service is available to anyone for any kind of trip where the origin and destination fall within the service area. The goal of the CIPT program is to provide reliable and timely transportation to residents in the counties that it serves.

FUNDING

The transit services are funded through state, federal and non-profit grants as well as utilizing a fare system that provides some farebox revenue. Each year, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) apportions funds to each state under Section 5311 Non-Metro Public Transportation. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is responsible for distributing this funding to public transportation providers in non-urbanized areas. The formula for funding is based solely on the non-urbanized population of Illinois.

The 5311 Program provides funding for capital projects as well as service operations with states and municipalities required to provide a percentage match. CIPT is authorized to pull down about \$700,000 annually but because of the match requirements, they have been unable to reach that amount. The County provides any required match funding through farebox revenue and additional grant funding from organizations like Community Support Systems as well as donations from organizations, townships and other municipalities. Should more match funding become available, CIPT would be able to secure additional funding from the state.

SERVICE & FARE STRUCTURE

Demand response service operates on-demand, meaning riders can call for a ride at any time. It is recommended that riders schedule rides within 24-hours of when the ride is needed but the service accommodates same day scheduling if the trip can fit into the schedule. Dispatchers are responsible for scheduling the rides and creating an efficient schedule for the day.

There is a cash fare required for trips. Seniors who apply for a reduced fare ID card are able to ride for free. The County funds trips for seniors, people with disabilities and veterans. Regular fares are \$3 per one-way trip and \$6 per round trip. Children under the age of 6 ride free with a paying adult while children ages 6-12 are \$2 per one-way trip and \$4 per round trip.

BUS FLEET & STAFFING

There are seventeen total vehicles in Effingham County however they are not all running at the same time. The buses are rotated to prioritize maintenance and the system is on a schedule for vehicle replacement to ensure vehicles remain in a state of good repair. One of the biggest challenges for providing service is hiring and retaining drivers. Currently, there are 9-10 drivers that can be scheduled each day with 5-6 drivers working at any given time. Service hours fluctuate depending on scheduled rides, but are typically from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm at night. The service has its highest ridership between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm.

In 2023, the County was able to hire a medical dispatcher that assists with scheduling medical trips. The medical dispatcher can help to coordinate trips between the rider and the hospital or clinic to ensure they are prioritized.



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

Investment in Public Transportation

Community opinions on the importance of investing in public transportation services.

VERY IMPORTANT



SOMEWHAT IMPORTANT



NEUTRAL



NOT VERY IMPORTANT



NOT IMPORTANT AT ALL



What the community is saying....

The community is looking for expanded service options from where services go to the times of day buses operate. It is also clear that there is a lack of understanding about how the services that are currently offered work.

"Too many rules and restrictions to ride public transit, very hard to comprehend rates and transfers even for a literate person with high levels of reading comprehension skills, unreliable."

"The limited public transportation is not well understood."

"It's relatively easy to get around by car or on foot, but a more robust public transportation solution would be nice."

"Public transportation buses aren't available for longer hours of the day and not available on weekends."

EFFINGHAM E-TRAX

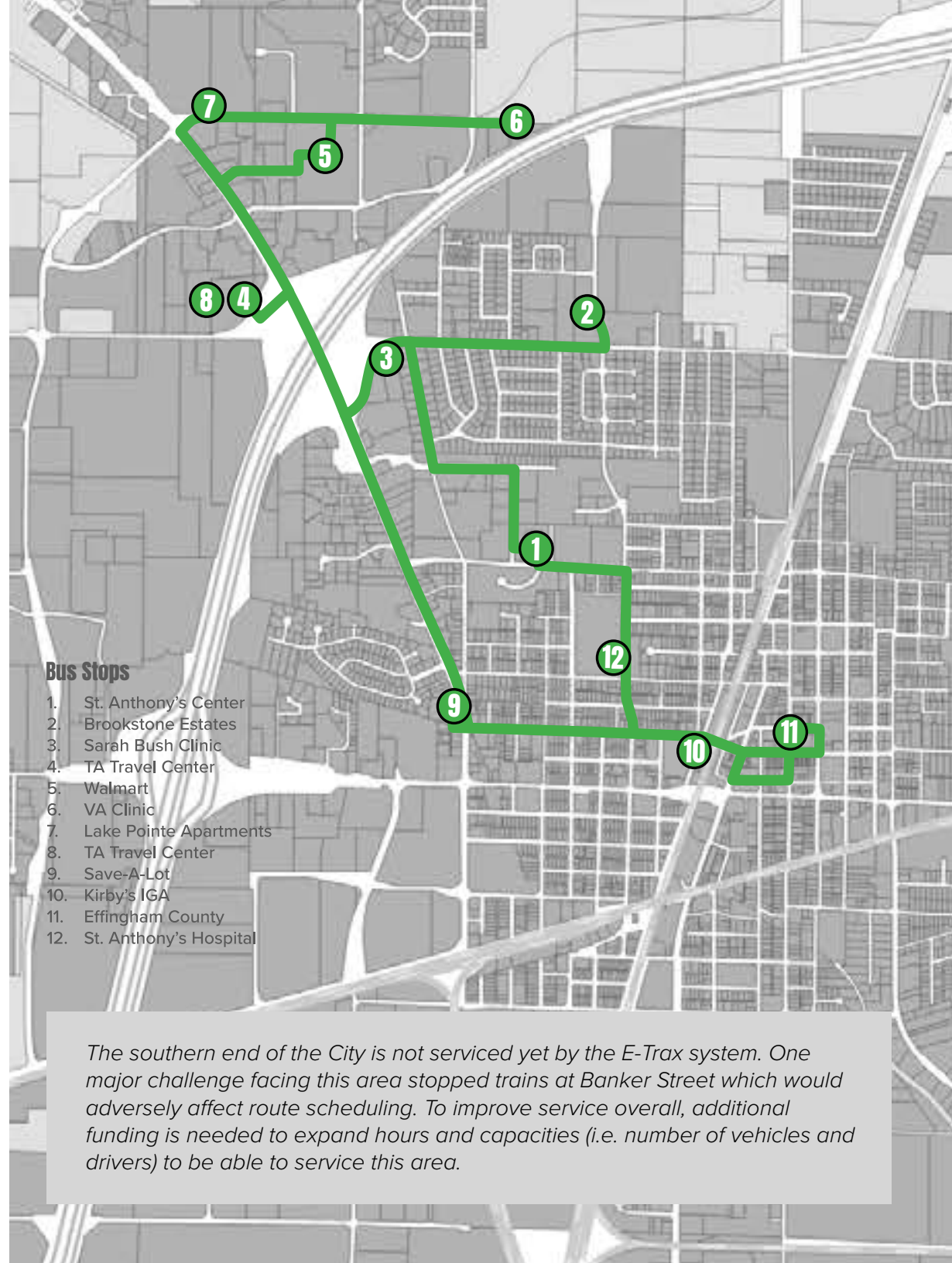
In July of 2023, the County launched E-Trax which is a deviated route system operating on the north side of the City. A deviated route is considered a fixed route type of service but allows for pick-ups within one quarter mile of the route. This means there are designated bus stops but if a rider cannot get to the bus stop they can call and be scheduled for a pick-up. Deviations must be scheduled 24 hours in advance and there is a limit of one deviation per route completion. The deviated system acts as a sort of hybrid between a demand-response system and fixed route.

FARE STRUCTURE

The E-Trax service is a lower cost than the demand-response due to the more limited service area. It costs one dollar per boarding and tokens can be purchased in place of a cash fare. Riders can receive a discounted fare if they purchase 12 tokens for \$10. Tokens do not expire. A monthly pass is \$35 and a disability pass is \$15.

ROUTE & STOPS

The route for the E-Trax service runs in the northern area of the City beginning at St. Anthony's Health Clinic on Temple Ave. The stops were selected based on high-traffic areas as well as whether the location had the ability to accommodate a stop. Many of the stops include medical centers as well as dense housing areas such as Lake Pointe Apartments and Brookstone Estates. Each vehicle run is scheduled to be completed in an hour which allows for more reliability and consistency in service.



The southern end of the City is not serviced yet by the E-Trax system. One major challenge facing this area stopped trains at Banker Street which would adversely affect route scheduling. To improve service overall, additional funding is needed to expand hours and capacities (i.e. number of vehicles and drivers) to be able to service this area.

PUBLIC TRANSIT GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 5

T.5 Ensure funding levels remain the same while pursuing new opportunities to fund and grow the public transportation system as a whole.

- T.5.1 Assist the County and Central Illinois Public Transit with information and resources needed to apply for and secure grant funding.
- T.5.2 Work with the County and Central Illinois Public Transit to identify costs associated with expansion of E-Trax services to the south part of the City.
- T.5.3 Pursue planning for an overpass or underpass along the best potential route for the E-Trax system to serve the south side of the City.

GOAL 6

T.6 Increase ridership of all services and expand the E-Trax route service into new areas of the City and beyond.

- T.6.1 Evaluate ridership of demand response and E-Trax services and address service needs as they arise.
- T.6.2 Work with the County to develop a route on the south side of the City.
- T.6.3 Develop and publish marketing materials that highlight the existing transit options and provide helpful information as to how the services work.
- T.6.4 Continue to make enhancement of the transportation circulation system a community priority.





PART 3

AIRPORT & RAIL

The City of Effingham is a unique community in that it is relatively rural but offers both air and rail access to the greater population. The Effingham Regional Airport is owned and operated by Effingham County and operated by a superintendent and airport commission, while the rail lines that run through the City are owned and operated by the Canadian National Railroad (CN) and CSX Transportation (CSX) as well as tracks owned by the Effingham Railroad Company a subsidiary of Regional Rail, LLC. Both air and rail transportation options provide many businesses in the area with access to the City's business environment including goods and people. These transportation options will remain an important asset to the area now and into the future.

VISION

Effingham offers exceptional freight, commuter rail and air services that support the local and regional economies.

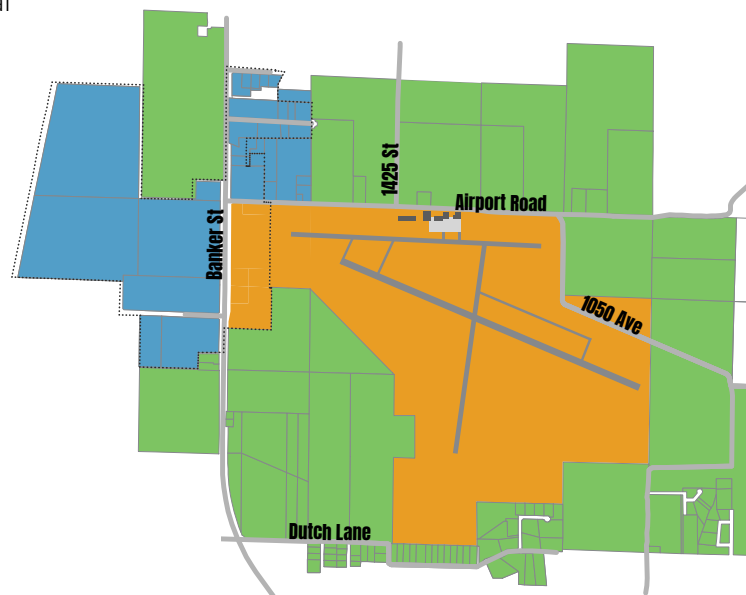
EFFINGHAM COUNTY REGIONAL AIRPORT

The Effingham County Regional Airport is a major asset to the City and region. The airport is located to the south of the City, with the lobby, hangars, and terminal accessed from Airport Road.

In 2022, the Illinois Department of Transportation funded a study to assess the economic impacts of airports in Illinois. The study looked at airports in terms of revenues generated through labor income, value added and general business. It found that the Effingham County Regional Airport has an impact of over \$9 million in business revenues annually. This is a significant amount of revenue coming into the region by air which speaks to the importance of ensuring the airport is well-maintained now and into the future. The airport is moving in a direction to be entirely self-sufficient on the sale of fuel and other revenues generated by overall operations. In 2023, the airport underwent a name change from Effingham County Memorial Airport to Effingham County Regional Airport which opens up the property to additional funding opportunities.

The majority of airport activity is business related. The airport does not offer regular charter or commercial flights due to the high costs of providing those types of services. The biggest challenge facing the airport is managing land development in the surrounding area to accommodate height restrictions and ensure safe operations. In the coming years the City may want to explore conversations with Effingham County around ownership, management or incorporation of the airport to better facilitate land use and development of the area.

The airport is undergoing a runway extension in 2025 that will extend the east-west runway to a total length of 6,000 feet. This extension improves runway capacity as well as safety when it comes to rain, snow and ice. While the City does not have an operational role in the airport they can contribute financially and in 2024 provided \$100,000 to help complete the runway extension project. The project also includes an extension of the taxiway that runs parallel to the extended runway and the relocation of a quarter-mile stretch of township road on the east end of the airport property to make room for the extension. There is also a new hanger currently under construction.



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

What the community is saying....

Community opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of Effingham's transportation options with an emphasis on air and rail.

Effingham's air and rail transportation are a huge asset to the community but there are definitely improvements that can be made, specifically to rail crossings, that can help with traffic flow and safety.

"Strengths are 2 interstates, 3 highways, rail lines, and the airport. Weaknesses is the south side of town doesn't get enough traffic, needs to have an interstate exit closer."

"Amtrak and airport improvements are an added strength."

"Those walking south to north cannot access the pedestrian path that just stops by the old train station as the railroad fenced off the tracks...the path is MUCH shorter than using the overpass."

"Banker railroad crossing is awful."

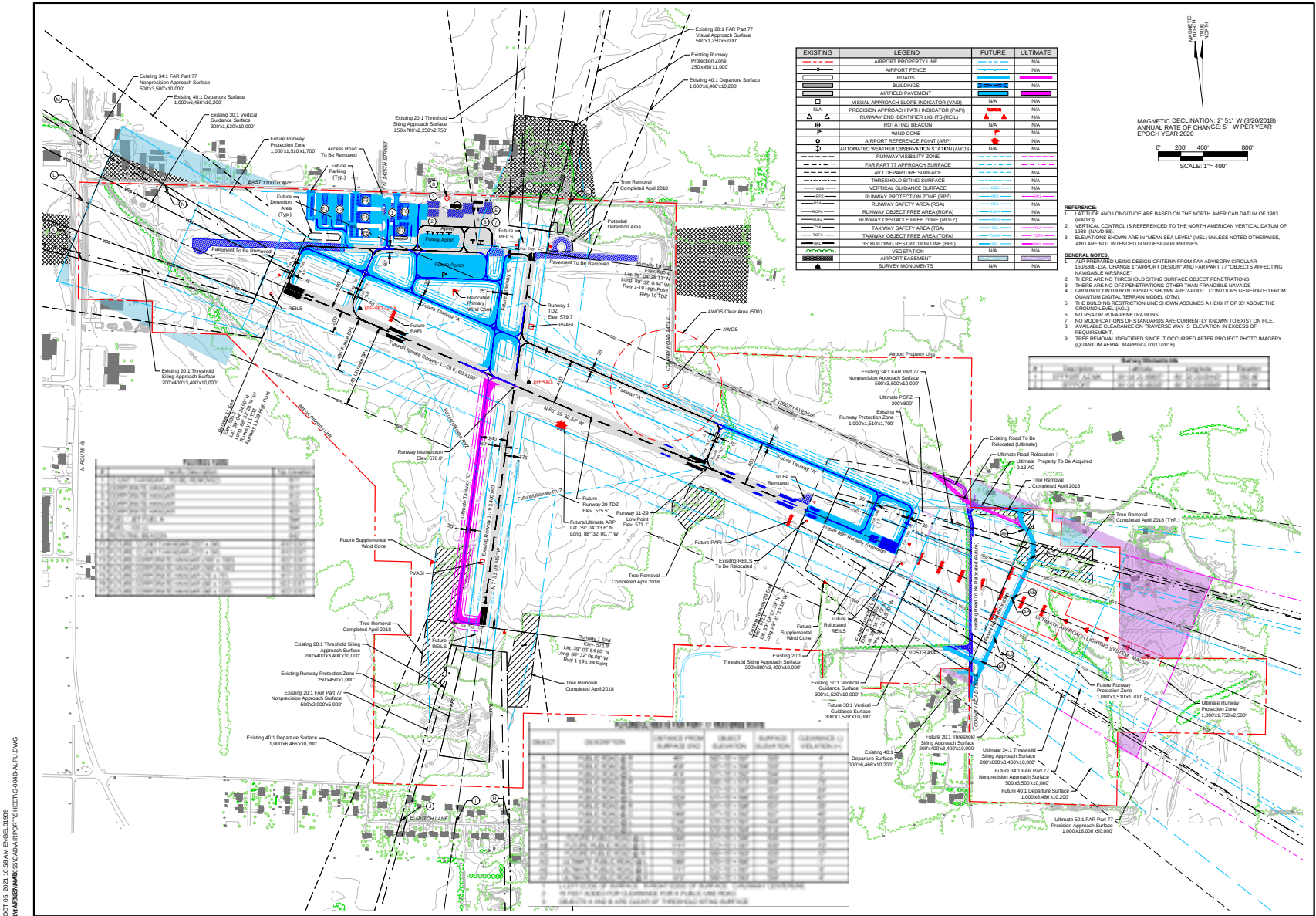
"South town railroad crossings can be a nuisance."

"Weakness, South Banker street railroad needs [to be] buried to allow traffic to flow."

"The greatest strength is the overpass/underpass on South Banker Street/Fayette Avenue. The greatest weakness is the [at-grade] railroad crossings."

"Strengths are highways, railroads/ Amtrak and interstates."

EFFINGHAM AIRPORT PLANNING



HANSON
Engineering | Planning | Allied Services
Hanson Professional Services Inc.
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Springfield, IL 62703
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Offices Nationwide
www.hanson-inc.com

Effingham County Memorial Airport
14449 E. 1100th Ave.
Effingham, IL 62401
Phone: (217) 536-5312

EFFINGHAM COUNTY
MEMORIAL AIRPORT
(1H2)
AIRPORT LAYOUT PLAN

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EFFINGHAM COUNTY
MEMORIAL AIRPORT
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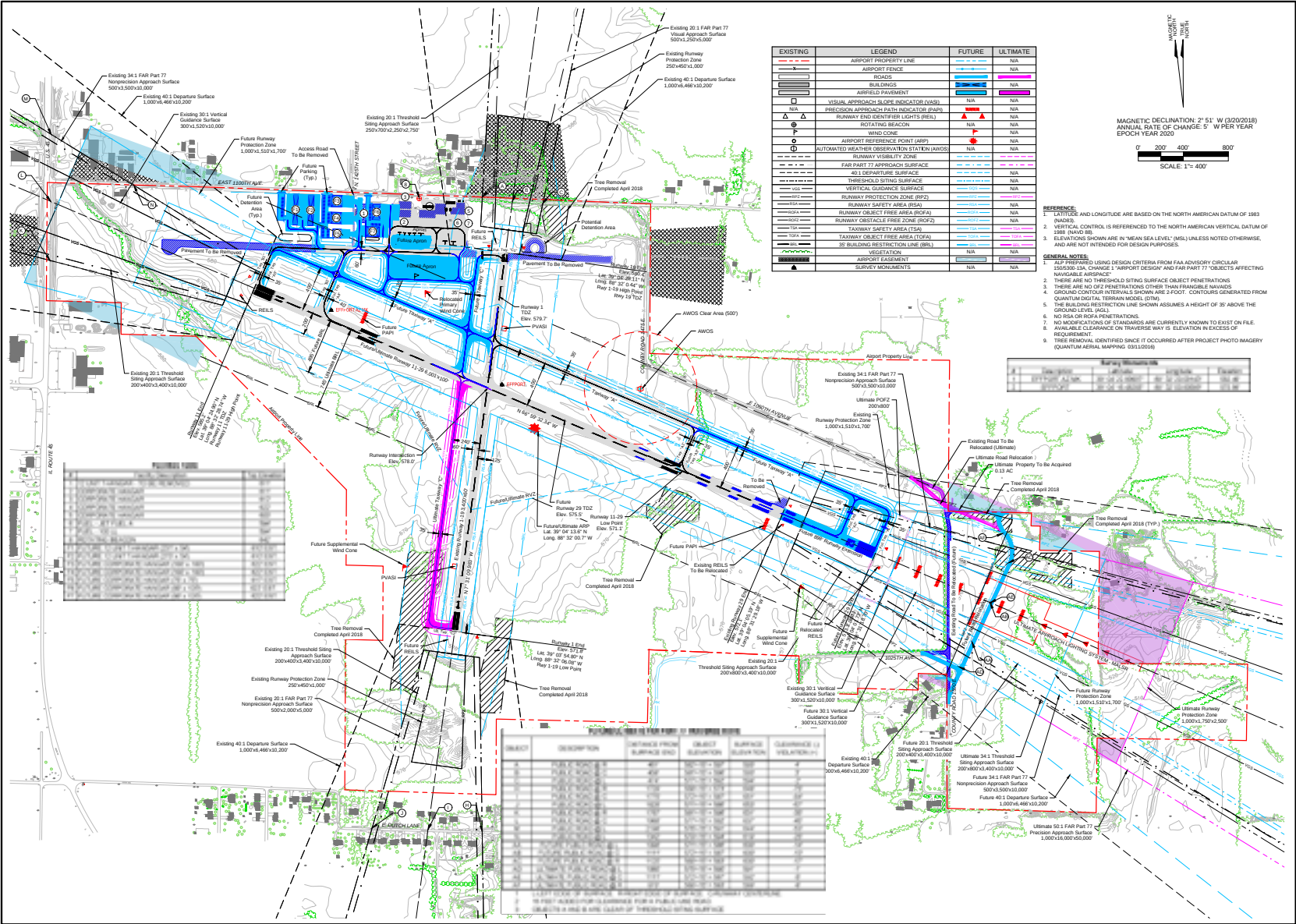
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DRAWN BY:	JAP 07/2019
REVIEWED BY:	SZ 07/2019
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ULTIMATE AIRPORT LAYOUT DRAWING

EFFINGHAM AIRPORT PLANNING

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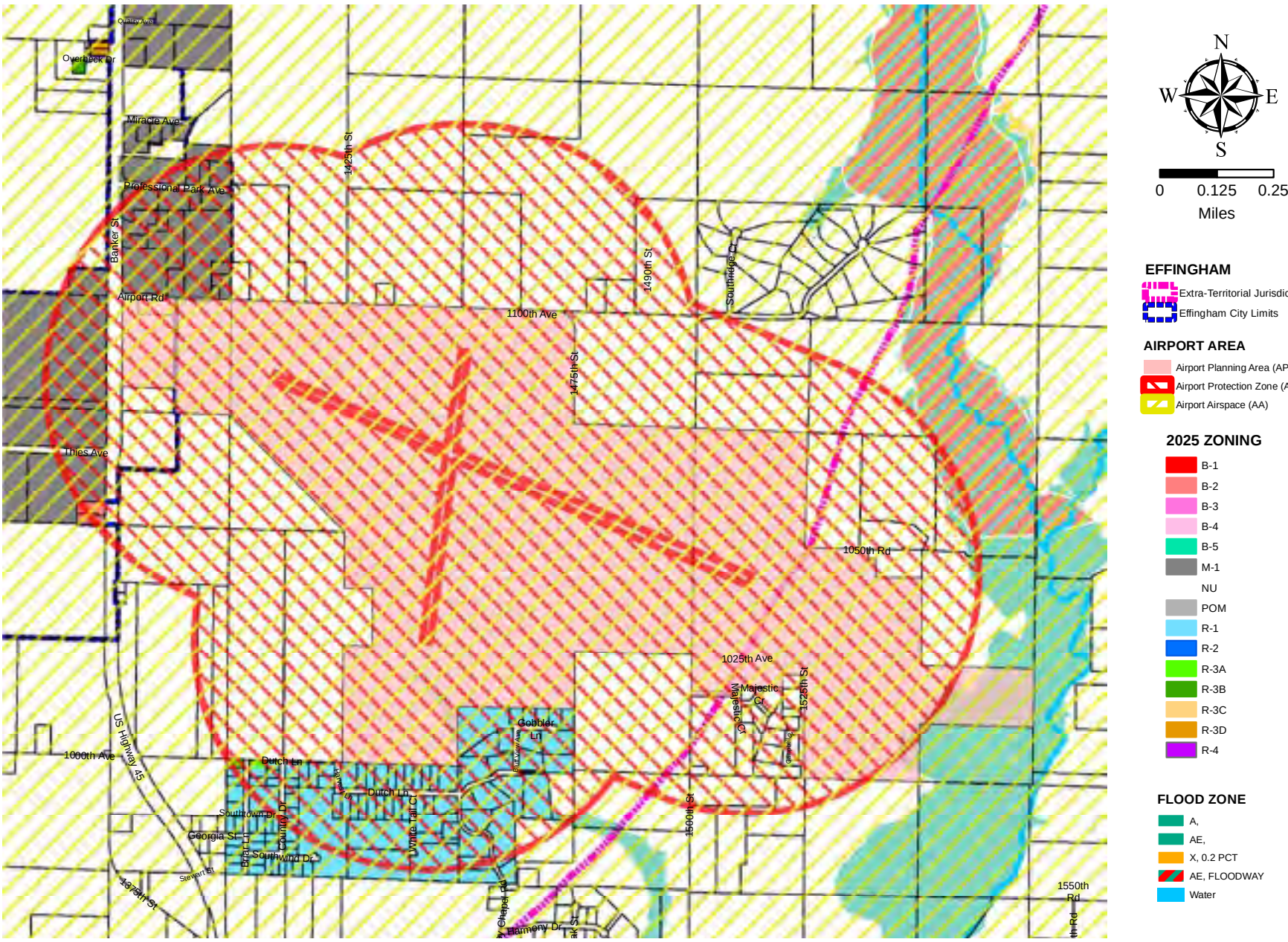
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EFFINGHAM COUNTY
MEMORIAL AIRPORT
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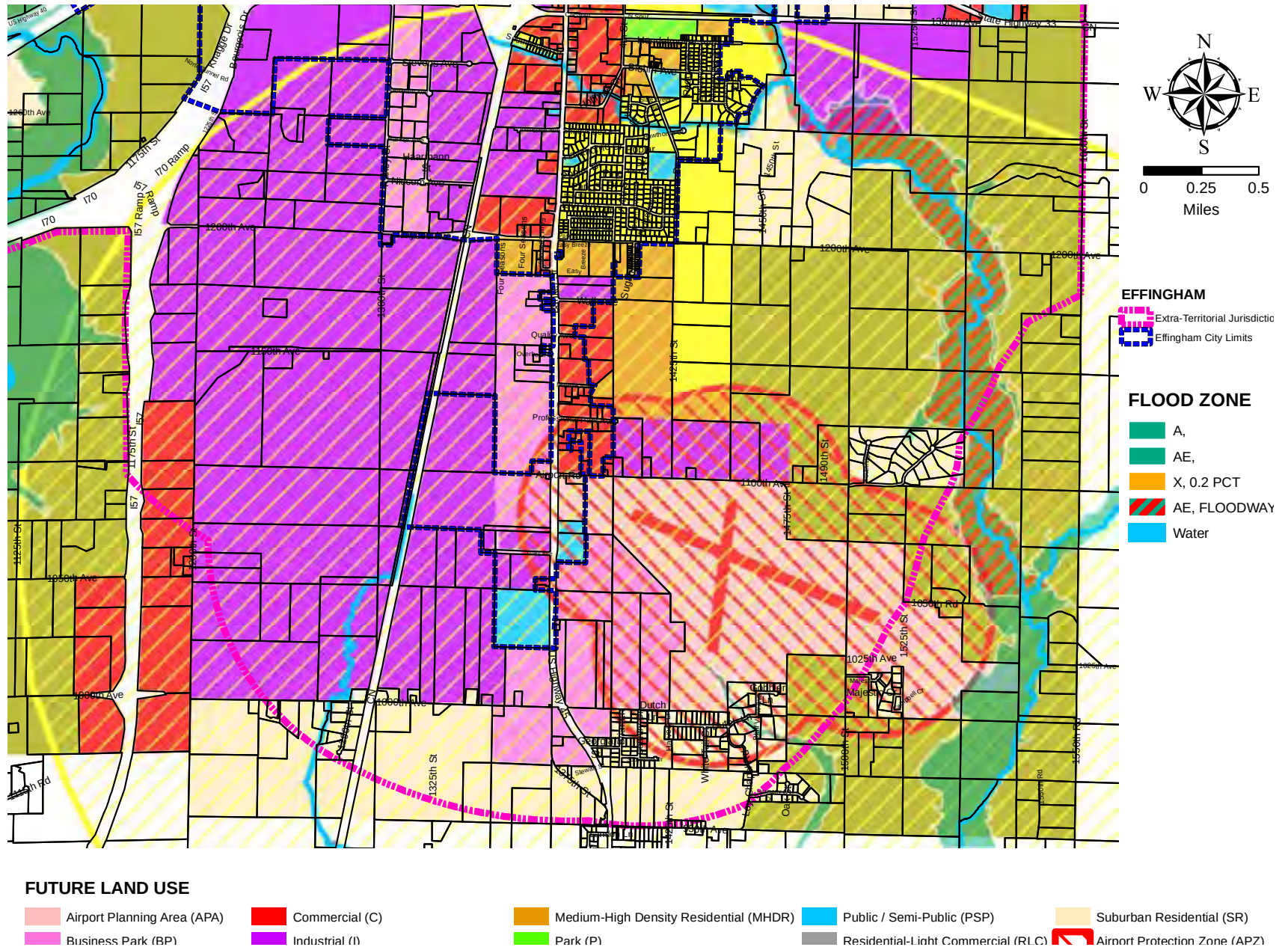
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6	07/2019	REVIEWED BY: SZ		
SHEET TITLE				

ULTIMATE AIRPORT
LAYOUT DRAWING

EFFINGHAM AIRPORT ZONING



EFFINGHAM AIRPORT FUTURE LAND USE



RAILROAD

Effingham has two rail companies that operate the rail lines running through the City. This includes Canadian National Railroad and CSX Transportation. Effingham Railroad Company operates an 8 mile stretch that connects to both CN and CSX rail lines. The company provides storage in transit and transload services for shipping and distribution.

There are three overpasses and one underpass in Effingham which helps with the flow in the City. Towards the south of the downtown area one of the rail lines turns east and the at-grade crossing on Banker Street remains a growing concern for traffic flow. This crossing has also limited the ability to extend public transit services to the south area of the City as mentioned in Part 2 - Public Transit.

The City has been able to establish six railroad quiet zone crossings and is hoping to pursue additional zones. A railroad quiet zone is a section of a rail line at least one-half mile in length that contains one or more consecutive public highway- rail grade crossings where train horns are not routinely sounded as they approach.

AMTRAK

Effingham offers an Amtrak station servicing the New Orleans, Saluki and Illini routes that provide access from Effingham to Chicago. Travelers are able to access metropolitan Chicago via the three different routes daily.

In 2022, the station completed major upgrades that included a new 700-foot long ADA compliant platform, LED lighting, ADA-compliant pathways and restrooms in the train station. Additionally, the City should continue to meet with other municipalities up and down the line to increase ridership, access more opportunities and to attend events and business.

● Quiet Zone Crossings ● South Banker Bottleneck



AIRPORT & RAIL

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 7

T.7 Assist the County in the pursuit of growth opportunities that will enhance the airport while ensuring land development around the airport is effectively managed to be compatible with continued operations.

- T.7.1 Work with the County to address future land uses and development that align with standards and height restrictions around the airport.
- T.7.2 Continue City involvement in the airport through staff participation in the Airport Commission.
- T.7.3 Cooperate with the County on airport capital improvements through available funding providing support for grant applications.
- T.7.4 Conduct a benefit/cost analysis for annexation of the airport into the City.
- T.7.5 Cooperate with the County on commercial and charter opportunities at the airport and become prepared to offer those services should funding be available.

GOAL 8

T.8 Pursue capital improvements that will enhance access and safety throughout the City in relation to the railroad.

- T.8.1 Conduct a feasibility study and pursue development of an underpass or overpass at the South Banker at-grade rail crossing to improve traffic flow.
- T.8.2 Pursue additional rail-crossing quiet zones throughout the City to improve overall quality of life.
- T.8.3 Continue supporting investment into the Amtrak station and providing commuter rail access to residents and visitors. This also includes additional parking.
- T.8.4 Maintain positive relationships with railroad operators, including Amtrak to ensure smooth and effective project management and implementation as capital improvements move forward.



QUALITY OF LIFE

in this section:

Parks and Open Space

Arts & Culture

Tourism

Historic Preservation

Effingham offers a diverse range of opportunities and amenities achieved through its parks and recreational facilities. The City optimizes its open spaces and preserves its agricultural land. The City also fosters a vibrant cultural scene, with attractions like the Effingham Performance Center and renowned culinary destinations.



EFFINGHAM

QUALITY OF LIFE

The Effingham community maintains a diverse park and recreation system that serves residents of all ages and interests. The City is home to several community parks, including Evergreen Hollow Park, Hendelmeyer Park, Community Park and Bliss Park, which provide expansive green spaces for walking, picnicking, and outdoor play. In addition to its parks, the Effingham Park District coordinates a variety of year-round programs, events, and leagues. From youth and adult sports to summer camps, and fitness classes, these offerings foster community engagement and healthy lifestyles. The City, County, and Park District also maintain scenic bike and pedestrian trails, such as the TREC Trail, which connects neighborhoods to points of interest throughout the city and promotes alternative transportation.

VISION

Effingham envisions a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable network of parks, trails, and recreational programs that inspire healthy lifestyles, foster community connections, and celebrate the City's natural beauty.

PARKS & OPEN SPACE

EFFINGHAM PARK DISTRICT

The City of Effingham and the Effingham Park District are two distinct entities, each with its own governing body, responsibilities, and sources of funding. While both organizations serve the residents of Effingham and collaborate to enhance community amenities, their roles and operations are separate.

The Effingham Park District is an independent governmental agency focused solely on providing and managing parks, recreational facilities, and programming for the community. It is governed by an elected Board of Commissioners, sets its own policies, and is funded primarily through a dedicated property tax levy, user fees, and grants. The Park District is responsible for the maintenance, development, and operation of local parks and recreational spaces, as well as offering a wide range of activities and events for all ages.

The Effingham Park District oversees several key parks and recreational facilities throughout the community, each offering unique amenities and opportunities for residents and visitors. Evergreen Hollow Park stands out as the largest and most comprehensive, featuring walking trails, fishing ponds, a public swimming pool, athletic fields, playgrounds, and picnic areas. Hendelmeyer and Community Parks are other popular destinations, known for tennis courts, ball diamonds, skate park, playgrounds, disc golf, pickleball courts and pavilions for gatherings.

In addition to these main parks, the Park District also manages the Richard E. Workman Sports and Wellness Complex, which offers indoor fitness and aquatic options.

The Effingham Park District is primarily funded through a dedicated property tax levy, which is approved by local voters and collected separately from City taxes. This provides a steady source of revenue to support the maintenance, operation, and development of parks and recreational facilities. In addition to property tax revenue, the Park District generates funding through user fees for programs, facility rentals, memberships, and special events. The district also pursues state and federal grants, sponsorships, and donations to help finance capital improvements and expand programming. This diversified funding structure allows the Park District to maintain high-quality amenities and offer a wide range of affordable recreation opportunities for the community.

BLISS PARK

The City operates and maintains one park property, Bliss Park. Bliss Park is located in the South Central area of Effingham, situated just East of Banker Street and North of Wabash Avenue. It is nestled within an older residential neighborhood, making it easily accessible to nearby families and residents. The park is just a short distance south of downtown Effingham, providing a convenient green space for those living in the South Central part of the City.

The property provides has mature trees with peaceful open areas for relaxation. There are also basketball courts, playground equipment, picnic tables, benches, a small pavilion and restrooms. While smaller and less developed than some of the Park District's larger parks, Bliss Park is an ideal spot for individuals and families seeking a quieter alternative for outdoor recreation and family gatherings.



TREC TRAIL

The TREC Trail (Trail Recreation Effingham County) connects neighborhoods, parks, and key community destinations. Designed for walking, running, and cycling, the scenic paved trail provides residents with a safe, accessible route for recreation, exercise, and alternative transportation while promoting healthy, active lifestyles throughout the community.

OPERATIONS & FUNDING

The TREC (Trail Recreation Effingham County) trail system is a multi-use, off-road trail network developed through a partnership between the City of Effingham, Effingham County, TREC, Park District, and other local agencies. It is designed to provide safe and pleasant walking and biking opportunities for residents and visitors, both for recreation and transportation. The TREC trail connects various neighborhoods within Effingham to major destinations, including popular recreation areas like Lake Sara, and helps bridge barriers such as I-57/70, which have historically limited non-motorized access across the City. Several phases of the trail have been completed since 2010, with additional segments planned to expand connectivity to the west, northwest, and outlying subdivisions.

The TREC trail system has been developed and expanded thanks to a combination of federal, state, and local funding, including significant grants such as the Illinois Transportation Enhancements Program (ITEP), Recreational Trails Program (RTP), and private donations. Notably, Effingham County and TREC received a \$1.17 million ITEP grant for trail development and \$410,000 from the RTP for the Calico Trail segment. Local fundraising efforts have also contributed over \$500,000 to support the trail, reflecting strong community support for active transportation options. Future improvements and expansions are continually discussed as part of Effingham's bicycle and pedestrian planning process, with the goal of creating a comprehensive network that increases access, safety, and recreation opportunities for people of all ages and abilities.

TREC TRAIL IMPROVEMENTS

The trail can continue to expand access further into the Lake Sara community as well as into the City of Effingham. The trail parallels Outer Belt West and can extend further north and south, providing more access to those areas of the City. Additionally, creating a connection directly into the heart of the City near Fayette Avenue can open up access to the eastern side of the City as well. Prioritizing new or improved crossings over highways and railroads,



COMMUNITY INSIGHTS

Types of Recreation Wanted

Community opinions on what types of recreation amenities they would like to see improved upon or expanded.

Top 5



The following list reflects the remaining types of recreation the community would like in order from most desired to least:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 6. PICNIC AREAS | 21. MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAILS |
| 7. COMMUNITY GARDENS | 22. BASKETBALL COURTS |
| 8. NATURE PRESERVES | 23. SOCCER FIELDS |
| 9. PICKLEBALL COURTS | 24. OUTDOOR FITNESS COURSES |
| 10. OUTDOOR POOL | 25. SKATE PARKS |
| 11. DOG PARKS | 26. VOLLEYBALL COURTS |
| 12. LASER TAG | 27. FITNESS CENTERS |
| 13. ATV TRAILS | 28. BOCCIE BALL COURTS |
| 14. ICE SKATING/HOCKEY RINKS | 29. INDOOR TENNIS |
| 15. ZIP LINING | 30. DISC (FRISBEE) GOLF COURSE |
| 16. RECREATIONAL PROGRAMMING | 31. HORSESHOE COURTS |
| 17. CAMPING AREAS | 32. FOOTBALL FIELDS |
| 18. BASEBALL/SOFTBALL DIAMONDS | 33. TENNIS COURTS |
| 19. INDOOR POOL | 34. INDOOR SOCCER |
| 20. GOLF COURSES | 35. INDOOR BASKETBALL |

such as I-57/70, will increase safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists. Enhancing crosswalks, signalization, and bridge or underpass projects are all considered to overcome these obstacles.

Wayfinding signage, benches, bike racks, lighting and rest areas along the trail can improve user experience, comfort and safety. User experience can also be improved by making improvements to parking, landscaping and facilities at trail heads - especially at parks like Evergreen Hollow, Community Park and Hendelmeyer Park. In 2019, the TREC Trail was extended into the City Limits by on street bike lanes and the construction of a trail head along Outer belt West. This project was funded by a \$960,000 ITEP Grant. Bike lanes connected parks, the downtown district, as well as other shopping and retail areas for local residents. Ensuring partnerships remain strong between the City, County, Park District and the TREC trail organization will be very important for future changes and improvements to the system.



OPEN SPACE

The city's open spaces, including parks, natural areas, and undeveloped lands, provide essential ecological services, recreational opportunities, and contribute to the overall quality of life for residents. However, increasing development pressures pose challenges to the preservation of these vital areas. As Effingham continues to grow, there is a risk of agricultural and open lands being converted for residential, commercial, or industrial purposes, potentially leading to habitat fragmentation and loss of agricultural productivity. It will be important to ensure zoning ordinances and land-use policies prevent agricultural lands and open spaces from incompatible development. Preserving these land uses is important in maintaining the rural nature of the area, especially since agriculture is a large industry and part of the community.



ARTS & CULTURE

Effingham boasts a vibrant cultural life, offering a rich variety of arts, music, and community programming that appeals to residents of all ages. The City supports a dynamic calendar of performances, art exhibits, and festivals through organizations such as the Effingham Performance Center and Fine Arts County of Effingham (FACE), which provide opportunities for local artists and performers to share their talents. Seniors and youth alike benefit from specialized programs—ranging from music and art classes to social gatherings and intergenerational workshops—hosted at community centers, the public library, and the Park District. Effingham is also dedicated to preserving its unique history, with active efforts to protect and celebrate its historic landmarks, such as the Effingham County Courthouse and other significant structures identified by the Effingham Regional Historical Society.

FESTIVALS & EVENTS

The City draws in visitors from the region for festivals and events throughout the year. The largest events held by the City include:

- Walking through Wonderland (over 4,000 visitors in one night!)
- Moccasin Creek Festival
- Effingham Artisan Fair
- EffingHAM JAM
- Hometown Christmas
- Corvette Funfest
- Multiple Parades

YOUTH & ADULT PROGRAMMING

Effingham offers a wide range of recreational programming for all ages and interests, primarily coordinated through the Effingham Park District and other community organizations. Programs include youth and adult sports leagues (such as basketball, soccer, baseball, and volleyball), aquatics and swimming lessons, fitness and wellness classes, and instructional programs in dance, gymnastics, and martial arts. The Park District also provides summer camps, after-school programs, and special events like holiday-themed activities and family fun nights. For seniors, there are exercise classes, social gatherings, and hobby groups. The Park District's recreational facilities—like the Richard E. Workman Sports and Wellness Complex, outdoor pools, and multiple parks—support year-round opportunities for active living, social engagement, and community connection.

TOURISM

Strategically located at the intersection of Interstates 57 and 70, Effingham serves as a regional hub for commerce, culture, and travel. This advantageous positioning has fostered a growing tourism sector, contributing over millions of dollars in visitor spending annually. Effingham offers a variety of attractions and, combined with the city's hospitality services, contribute to its growing reputation as a Midwestern destination. As Effingham grows its tourism economy it will be important to focus on how to transition from a pass-through point to a sought-after destination.

KEY ATTRACTIONS & INITIATIVES

The Effingham Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) plays a pivotal role in promoting the city as a travel destination, offering marketing support, event coordination, and grant programs to stimulate tourism-related activities. Landmarks like the Cross at the Crossroads, the Effingham Performance Center, and Lake Sara offer diverse experiences, from spiritual reflection to outdoor recreation. Visit Effingham partners with the Tourism Advisory Board to allocate a portion of hotel-motel tax revenues to promote events that attract visitors. The Tourism Advisory Board advises on the allocation of hotel-motel tax revenues to promote tourism, ensuring funds are directed toward events and initiatives that attract visitors.

The tourism economy in Effingham is growing but the City faces some limitations when seeking to become a more prominent tourism destination. There is adequate lodging that can support large events. As has been discussed throughout this Comprehensive Plan, housing and workforce are an important part of

the tourism economy. Encouraging new businesses to move into the area means providing adequate housing options for their potential workforce. Investing in infrastructure and accessibility also provides visitors with a comfortable experience when visiting the City. Creating a vibrant downtown area is also an important part of a tourism in the city as people enjoy walking down quaint main streets.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Effingham's approach to historic preservation has focused on identifying and documenting sites of local significance, such as historic homes, churches, commercial buildings, and cemeteries. Much of the early work was led by local organizations like the Effingham Regional Historical Society, which produced surveys and pictorial records of structures more than 50 years old. While the Effingham County Courthouse is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, most other identified sites have not received formal certification.

The City's past efforts have placed importance on assessing which sites are truly significant to better integrate them into planning and land use decisions. Ideas such as adopting a local historic preservation ordinance and participating in state and federal preservation programs have been discussed but have not been solidified. In the downtown area, the concept of preservation and adaptive reuse could play a supporting role in economic development and community identity. Overall, historic preservation in Effingham has involved a combination of community interest, documentation, and incremental steps toward more formal protection, with future opportunities identified for expanding these efforts through partnerships, ordinances, and educational initiatives.





Visit Effingham's mission, above all else, is to provide a welcoming environment for all individuals planning to visit our city. Our hope is that everyone who travels here senses a deep comfort and cozy familiarity, upon arrival.

Effingham Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB)

The mission of the Effingham Tourism Department is to enhance the economic development of our region through the promotion of tourism and the comprehensive marketing of our destination. Through the establishment of a local convention and visitors bureau, the Tourism Department helps to create business for the City of Effingham and surrounding communities by aggressively promoting the City as an overnight destination and by increasing visitor awareness of the area, which provides an economic benefit to the City.

Tourism Advisory Board Grants

Visit Effingham empowers our city's economic state by existing as an organization. We strategically funnel potential travelers into our city to enhance the economic development of our region through the promotion of tourism and the comprehensive marketing of our destination. In doing so, we are heightening the potential growth of local businesses, creating emotional connections for travelers, and developing lasting experiences for our locals and for visitors. Grants are to provide assistance for events resulting in increased overnight stays and open to the public. These events can vary from sporting events like the Crossroads Classic Volleyball Tournament, Effingham Teutopolis Holiday Basketball Tournament and the Memorial Day Wood Bat Classic to Mid America Corvette Funfest, Artisan Fair and Moccasin Creek Festival.

Event Sponsorships

Visit Effingham also sponsors or co-sponsors many events and activities for the community and visitors. Partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce, Thelma Keller Convention Center and many other organizations to bring the Effingham Jam BBQ Cook-off, Hometown Christmas, Effingham Restaurant Week and many other events to the Effingham Community.

Venues

Effingham offers a variety of locations for events and activities. The Thelma Keller Convention Center hosts a number of large, with some being a week long, conventions, trade shows, galas, weddings to name a few. The Downtown area hosts Hometown Christmas and Cruise Night among other events. The Effingham Event Center also is a venue for weddings, trade shows and meetings. While the Effingham Performance Center is known for the performing arts, it also hosts a variety of other events and meetings. The Effingham Park District with the Richard E. Workman Sports and Wellness Complex along with Community, Evergreen and Hendelmeyer Parks are venues for Wonderland in Lights and numerous sports tournaments and other events. The Village Square Mall is another venue - the City and community will be working with future owners to make it a destination for visitors.

Hospitality and Training

The Chamber of Commerce, a great resource for the business community, is also a great partner in promoting Effingham. One of the programs offered by the Chamber is education and training.

QUALITY OF LIFE

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1

Q.1 Protect and improve natural spaces, parks and agricultural land by incorporating sustainable practices in land development and maintenance.

- Q.1.1 Identify and preserve existing natural areas, such as woodlands, wetlands, and prairies, within City parks and open spaces.
- Q.1.2 Integrate native plantings and sustainable landscaping techniques in new park designs and park renovations.
- Q.1.3 Encourage eco-friendly maintenance practices, including reduced pesticide and fertilizer use, composting, and water conservation measures.
- Q.1.4 Develop and promote nature-based recreation opportunities, such as walking trails, wildlife observation areas, and pollinator gardens.
- Q.1.5 Partner with local schools, organizations, and agencies to offer educational programs and volunteer events focused on environmental stewardship and conservation.
- Q.1.6 Encourage community participation in park clean-up days, tree planting, and habitat restoration projects.
- Q.1.7 Develop and enforce zoning regulations that prioritize the conservation of agricultural lands and open spaces, directing growth towards already developed areas and preventing urban sprawl.
- Q.1.8 Support expansion of the TREC trail where feasible.
- Q.1.9 Plan and apply for funding for a pedestrian overpass on Maple Street over I-57/I-70.

GOAL 2

Q.2 Continue to bring new cultural experiences into the community and foster growth of the local art and music scene.

- Q.2.1 Establish a creative place-making initiative that ties arts and culture to economic development and neighborhood identity.

- Q.2.2 Promote cultural tourism by advertising local art and music events regionally and featuring them in visitor materials.
- Q.2.3 Support community arts initiatives, including public art installations and cultural events.
- Q.2.4 Re-purpose underutilized public spaces (e.g., parks, plazas, municipal buildings) as venues for performances, art exhibitions, and cultural gatherings.
- Q.2.5 Integrate arts and cultural elements into city/tourism- sponsored events to elevate local talent and foster broader community participation.

GOAL 3

Q.3 Increase tourism in Effingham by enhancing visitor experiences, promoting local attractions, and strengthening the city's identity as a regional destination.

- Q.3.1 Review tourism grant funding and sponsorship eligibility, requirements and funding levels with the Tourism Advisory Board to ensure continued support of event and activity promoters.
- Q.3.2 Recognize the importance of wayfinding signage and visitor amenities to improve the experience for out-of-town guests and create a more navigable and welcoming environment downtown and near major attractions.
- Q.3.3 Expand and support signature events and festivals that draw regional attention and align with Effingham's cultural, recreational, and culinary strengths.
- Q.3.4 Continue to work with the Effingham County Chamber, hotels, restaurants, bars and other businesses to provide Hospitality Training to make Effingham the friendliest and safest destination in the world.
- Q.3.5 Improve coordination with lodging providers to package experiences and offer promotions that encourage overnight stays and extended visits.
- Q.3.6 Leverage the City's strategic location at major highway interchanges to capture pass- through traffic with effective signage, digital engagement, and well-maintained rest stops or welcome areas.
- Q.3.7 Promote Effingham's public art, cultural venues, and historic assets through walking tours, mobile apps, or printed materials to encourage deeper engagement with the city.
- Q.3.8 Explore the feasibility of a cultural or visitor center that can serve as a hub for tourism information, event coordination, and local arts promotion.

- Q.3.9 Continue to promote, assist and expand the various venues the community has to offer such as the Thelma Keller Convention Center, Effingham Event Center, Effingham Performance Center, Lake Sara, Park District and School facilities.
- Q.3.10 Help promote youth and adult sporting and recreational events – available facilities, community athletic groups and teams (basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, swim, etc), tournaments that bring visitors (day trip or overnight).

GOAL 4

Q.4 Preserve and enhance Effingham's historic sites and structures to strengthen community identity, support downtown vitality, and connect residents and visitors to the City's heritage

- Q.4.1 Identify and document historically significant sites, structures, and districts throughout Effingham, with particular attention to the downtown area.
- Q.4.2 Regularly update and maintain an inventory of historic resources, including photographs, descriptions, and historical significance.
- Q.4.3 Promote the adaptive reuse and sensitive rehabilitation of historic buildings for new community, cultural, or commercial uses.
- Q.4.4 Encourage the designation of eligible properties and districts for local, state, or national historic recognition.
- Q.4.5 Explore the adoption of a local historic preservation ordinance to establish guidelines for protection and review of significant sites.
- Q.4.6 Partner with local organizations, such as the Effingham Regional Historical Society, to advance research, education, and advocacy for preservation.
- Q.4.7 Provide educational programs and materials to increase public awareness of Effingham's history and the value of preservation.
- Q.4.8 Seek grants, incentives, and technical assistance to support property owners in restoring and maintaining historic buildings.

4

FUTURE LAND USE



FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The Future Land Use (FLU) Map identifies categories of similar use, character, and density. Included with each land use category is an explanation of the intent for the category as well as design and development strategies for each.

The FLU map and the corresponding text will be consulted by Staff, Plan Commissioners, and the City Council, whenever development is proposed. This is especially critical when a development requests a zoning change or the division of a lot(s). Zoning changes and development should be consistent with the use category shown on the map and the corresponding text.

In instances where the FLU Map differs from the current land use, the intent is not to change the existing zoning or use. The City may use this map reactively, guiding development proposals brought forth by property owners.

FUTURE LAND USE MAP AMENDMENTS

At times, it may be appropriate to consider amendments to the Future Land Use Map. The following questions were discussed as part of the creation of the map and should be considered before approving amendments.

Agricultural

- Does the lot have a history of productive farming activities?
- Does the lot contain prime soil?
- Does the lot appear viable for long-term agricultural use?
- Is the lot large enough to be economically used for agricultural purposes?
- Is the lot accessible to the machinery needed to produce and harvest products?

The more questions which can be answered with “no,” the more likely a land use change should be considered.

Harmonious and Compatible

- Will the proposed development, or map amendment, have a substantial adverse effect upon adjacent property or the character of the area?
- Will existing residential neighborhoods be adversely affected?

A property owner may include approaches that minimize incompatibility or conflicts between users.

Natural Resources

- Does the land contain important natural features such as wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, scenic vistas, or significant woodlands, which will be adversely affected by the proposed development?
- Is the proposed building envelope located within the setback of floodplain zones (raised above regional flood line)?
- Will the proposed development result in undue water, air, light, or noise pollution?

A property owner may include approaches that preserve or enhance the most important and sensitive natural features of the proposed site.

Access for Emergency Vehicles

- Does the layout of the proposed development provide appropriate roads and/or driveways suitable for travel or access by emergency vehicles?

Public Facilities and Services

- Does the proposed development have public street, water and sanitary sewer available or can it be extended to the development?
- Will the development require additional or expanded public facilities and services?
- Will the provision of those services place an unreasonable financial burden on the City?

Property owners may need to demonstrate to the city that the current level of services in the city is adequate. This may include, but is not limited to, demonstrating the capacity for schools, the transportation system, emergency services (police, fire, EMS), parks and recreation, library services, and water and/or sewer services to serve the proposed use.

The owners may also be asked to demonstrate how they can assist the city with any needs for public services or facilities.

Public Need

- Is there a clear public need for the proposed change?
- Have unanticipated circumstances resulted in a need for change?
- Will the proposed development likely have a positive fiscal or social impact on the city?

The City may require that the owner fund the preparation of a fiscal impact analysis by an independent professional.

THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP IN PRACTICE

The future land use categories on the map identify areas of similar use, character, and density. Remember, these classifications are NOT zoning districts – and therefore, do not legally set performance criteria for land uses such as setbacks, height, and bulk limitations. However, they do identify zoning districts in the Effingham Zoning Ordinance that currently fit within each future land use category. The strategies listed below within each category are provided to help property owners and City Officials make decisions during the development process that are consistent with the intent of each land use category. These strategies may be used to help determine whether to approve a rezoning application, how to apply to zoning districts, and what development conditions to set, if any. Many categories also feature design recommendations based on best management practices and good planning principles.

RURAL- AGRICULTURE (RUR)

This land use category is intended for areas where the rural character will be preserved. These areas are primarily located in the City's extraterritorial jurisdiction and unlikely, or infeasible, for urban development in the short- to mid-term. Uses allowed in this future land use category include farming, farmsteads, forestry, open space, rural residential, farm family businesses, or other agricultural related businesses. These areas could also see some commercial and/or light industrial uses by Special Use Permit with conditions such as proximity to residential and major highways, buffers, and others. The majority of these lands are undeveloped; however, they may contain farmsteads or residential developments with a minimum lot size of approximately 10 acres. To prevent potential conflicts with farm operations, new housing should be located at the edges of fields, on non-productive lands, and away from prime agricultural soils. Developments within this category are served by private wells and septic systems.

Conservation areas are lands which the city wishes to protect because they are vital to the region's ecosystem and/or they are considered an important part of the City's character and culture. Conservation areas may include land that is restricted from development due to the slope or wetland characteristics. Conservation areas may also include land that is developable, but which the city chooses to protect by preventing such development. The intended use for Conservation land is passive recreation (boating, biking and walking paths, ATV trails, horseback trails, etc.).

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- NU Non-urban District
- Other Districts with Special Use Permit Approval

Land Use Strategies

- New homes should be sited on nonproductive soil in ways that minimize disruption of agricultural use and avoid the creation of new access points to state highways. Small lots (e.g. minimum 1.5 acres) are preferred for subdivisions, especially if the remaining land is in agricultural use. For farmsteads and non-subdivisions, it is recommended the lot sizes be a minimum of 10 acres to prevent sprawl and protect prime agricultural ground and conservation areas.
- Rural residential subdivisions containing 5 or more homes are discouraged, except in areas where urban development is unlikely to occur, even many years from now. They are intended for long-term development at Suburban Residential intensities. Higher density development should be considered when public/semi-public water and wastewater services are available.
- When rural residential subdivisions are proposed, it is strongly encouraged to utilize conservation design strategies that minimize the disruption of natural features and rural character.
- In areas where a Public Water System is available, cluster development may be considered at a density of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres with open areas set aside for denser development when public sanitary sewer is available. Densities of 5 dwelling units per acre may be considered if a private or semi-public centralized on-site package wastewater treatment system is provided.

SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL (SR)

This land use category is intended for existing and planned neighborhoods that feature a mix of housing unit types and are served by City for services and facilities on a limited basis. These are scattered residential developments with a lower concentration of population.

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- NU Non Urban District
- R-1 Single-Family Residence District
- R-2 Single-Family Residence District
- PRD Planned Residential Development District

Land Use Strategies

- Residential uses should be developed to include connection to regional trails for bicycle transportation and recreation.
- Cluster development patterns should be encouraged in these areas to conserve open space.
- SR areas are typically served by the commercial services within the adjacent urban communities.
- Like the RUR Area, in areas where a Public Water System is available, cluster development may be considered at a density of 1 dwelling unit per 2 acres with open areas set aside for denser development when public sanitary sewer is available. Densities of 5 dwelling units per acre may be considered if a private or semi-public centralized on-site package wastewater treatment system is provided.
- Due to private sewage regulations by the Effingham County Health Department in areas not served by a public sanitary sewer system, the minimum lot sizes may be 1 acre or more.

LOW TO MODERATE DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (LMDR)

The low to moderate density residential land use category is intended for planned neighborhoods that feature a mix of housing unit types that encourage walkability. The housing units are served by City services and compatible facilities, and municipal and institutional uses should be allowed. These uses include schools, places of worship, libraries, parks, and similar uses, all of which are designed to accommodate motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians for a more multi-modal neighborhood. The recommended density for the low- to medium-density residential district is 2-6 units per acre.

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- R-1 Single-Family Residence District
- R-2 Single-Family Residence District
- PRD Planned Residential Development District
- R-3A Attached Single-Family Dwelling District
- R-3B Two-Family (Duplex) and Three-Family (Triplex) Dwelling District

Emphasis on Good Design

The City encourages residential projects (new construction, infill, and remodeling) to incorporate design strategies that will maintain neighborhood property values over time and enhance the social function and safety of the neighborhood. New subdivisions should emphasize a variety of architectural materials and housing styles to avoid cookie cutter development and monotonous design.

Land Use Strategies

- Urban services will be required for all new development within and adjacent to City limits, including municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater management systems.
- Residential uses should be developed to include trails for bicycle transportation and recreation.
- Though housing is the predominant use in most residential neighborhoods, healthy, balanced neighborhoods may also include other uses that support the needs of residents, including:
 - Parks and recreational facilities
 - Small municipal and institutional facilities (e.g. learning center, library, fire station, etc.)
 - Community centers
 - Places of worship
 - Day care centers
 - Small businesses that serve neighborhood needs
- The City will encourage and support the creation of neighborhood plans for growth areas and for existing neighborhoods experiencing redevelopment. Neighborhood plans can proactively determine how to establish a unique identity for each neighborhood and how varied housing types and uses can be appropriately integrated into each of them.
- Infill development will protect the character of existing residential neighborhoods.
- New subdivisions should emphasize a variety of architectural materials and housing styles to avoid cookie cutter development and monotonous design.

MODERATE TO HIGH DENSITY RESIDENTIAL (MHDR)

The moderate to high density residential land use category is intended for planned neighborhoods that feature a mix of housing unit types that encourage walkability. Many of these areas are located in the developing or developed areas. These areas tend to buffer LDR areas from more intensive development. Similar to low- to moderate-density land uses, the dwelling units are served by City services and compatible facilities. Municipal and institutional uses should be allowed. Additionally, the recommended density for the moderate- to high-density residential district is 4-10 units per acre.

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- R-1 Single-Family Residence District
- R-2 Single-Family Residence District
- PRD Planned Residential Development District
- R-3A Attached Single-Family Dwelling District
- R-3B Two-Family (Duplex) and Three-Family (Triplex) Dwelling District
- R-3C Multiple-Dwelling District
- R-3D Multiple-Dwelling District
- R-4 Limited Office and Retail District
- B-1 Neighborhood Shopping District

Emphasis on Good Design

The City encourages residential projects (new construction, infill, and remodeling) to incorporate design strategies that will maintain neighborhood property values over time and enhance the social function and safety of the neighborhood. New subdivisions should emphasize a variety of architectural materials and housing styles to avoid cookie cutter development and monotonous design.

Land Use Strategies

- Urban services will be required for all new development within and adjacent to City limits, including municipal water, wastewater, and stormwater management systems.
- Residential uses should be developed to include trails for bicycle transportation and recreation.
- Though housing is the predominant use in most residential neighborhoods, healthy, balanced neighborhoods may also include other uses that support the needs of residents, including:
 - Parks and recreational facilities
 - Small municipal and institutional facilities (e.g. learning center, library, fire station, etc.)
 - Community centers
 - Places of worship
 - Day care centers
 - Small businesses that serve neighborhood needs
- The City will encourage and support the creation of neighborhood plans for growth areas and for existing neighborhoods experiencing redevelopment. Neighborhood plans can proactively determine how to establish a unique identity for each neighborhood and how varied housing types and uses can be appropriately integrated into each of them.
- Infill development will protect the character of existing residential neighborhoods.
- New subdivisions should emphasize a variety of architectural materials and housing styles to avoid cookie cutter development and monotonous design.

RESIDENTIAL TO LIGHT COMMERCIAL (RLC)

The RLC areas would generally be, but not exclusively, in the central area of the City or near areas of goods and services to the public. The light commercial uses in these areas would supplement or enhance the services with the residential areas providing housing near goods and services. These areas would also serve as a transitional area between high commercial uses along major arterials and collector streets to low- to moderate-density residential areas.

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- R-3C Multiple-Dwelling District
- R-3D Multiple-Dwelling District
- R-4 Limited Office and Retail District
- B-1 Neighborhood Shopping District
- Special Use Permits for more intense commercial uses.

Emphasis on Good Design

The City encourages residential projects (new construction, infill, and remodeling) to incorporate design strategies that will maintain neighborhood property values over time and enhance the social function and safety of the neighborhood. New subdivisions should emphasize a variety of architectural materials and housing styles to avoid cookie cutter development and monotonous design.

Land Use Strategies

- Primarily for the redevelopment of existing areas in the central area of the City, however, new development is encouraged along major roadways.
- Residential uses should be developed to include trails for bicycle transportation and recreation.
- Though commercial is the predominant use in along major roadways, the MRLC would provide a transitional use or buffer between major roadways and residential neighborhoods. Residential uses in these areas could include townhomes or dwelling units above the ground floor in multi-story buildings.
- The City will encourage and support the creation of mixed-use areas along major roadways and for existing neighborhoods experiencing redevelopment. These plans can establish a unique identity for each area and how mixed uses can be appropriately integrated into each of them increasing housing stock and business in the community.
- New development should emphasize a variety of architectural materials and housing styles to avoid cookie cutter development and monotonous design.

COMMERCIAL (C)

The Commercial District is intended to support a variety of retail, service, and office facilities that meet both local and regional needs. These areas are designed for high visibility and easy access, with well-maintained storefronts, parking, and pedestrian connections. The city encourages a mix of businesses that enhance economic activity, support daily needs, and contribute to an active streetscape. Commercial development will be located along I-57 and I-70 (particularly around interchanges), along major arterials, in the Central Business District (Downtown), and within Planned Unit Developments (PUD-C).

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- R-4 Limited Office and Retail District
- B-1 Neighborhood Shopping District
- B-2 General Commercial District
- B-3 Central Business District
- B-4 Planned Shopping Center District
- B-5 Highway Commercial District
- PUD-C Planned Unit Development – Commercial

Emphasis on Good Design

Design within both standard commercial areas, Downtown and PUD-Cs should promote walkability, visual cohesion, and a strong sense of place. Buildings should face the street, with quality architecture, unified signage, and thoughtful landscaping that enhances the pedestrian experience. Shared spaces, such as plazas and walkways, should be safe, attractive, and well-connected, creating a welcoming environment for customers, residents, and visitors alike. The City encourages all commercial projects to use design strategies that will maintain property values over time. This section offers different strategies for businesses within or near residential neighborhoods. Encourage strip commercial development along US and State highways.

Land Use Strategies

- The City supports reinvestment in aging or underused commercial sites, encouraging a diverse mix of businesses to meet community needs.
- Development must align with current codes to ensure public safety, accessibility, and long-term viability.
- Street-facing ground floors should feature active, customer-focused uses to create engaging pedestrian experiences.
- Streetscape upgrades—such as crosswalks, streetlights, and public seating—will be implemented to improve safety and encourage foot traffic.
- Encourage mixed-use development that balances commercial needs with residential and civic uses.
- Promote creative site layouts that preserve open space and natural features while supporting pedestrian access.
- Require a clear phasing plan and consistent quality across all project elements.
- Ensure compatibility with surrounding land uses through appropriate transitions and buffering.
- Consider expansion of the Central Business District (B-3 Central Business District) or a new Zoning District for the areas immediately adjacent with consideration of revised parking requirements in all commercial districts.
- When appropriate, require a traffic study (to show anticipated traffic flows, amounts and required changes in the size, configuration or turning lanes of public roads directly serving or abutting the project).

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT (CBD)

The Downtown District is intended for the preservation and continuation of pedestrian-oriented development. This includes entertainment, commercial, office, civic, institutional, and residential uses in a “traditional, walkable downtown setting” with on-street parking and minimal building setbacks. This area will remain the City’s pride and focal point for community gatherings and activities. Encouraged uses include eating and drinking establishments, small grocery shops, specialty food shops, local retail, hairdressers/barbers, jewelers, hardware stores, and small office uses that reinforce the Downtown’s “small-town” character. A few parcels within this area are underutilized or are in disrepair and are prime candidates for redevelopment. The city will actively promote the rehabilitation or redevelopment of these parcels for commercial, civic, or mixed use. Residential uses above the ground floor is encouraged in the Central Business District. However, context sensitive, multi-story residential may be appropriate in the CBD.

Uses in the Central Business District area is expected to be integrated both vertically and horizontally. Vertical integration means that different types of uses are layered within a single building, such as retail uses on the ground floor with residential uses above. Horizontal integration means that buildings throughout downtown contribute to the overall well-being of the area, providing convenient access to amenities and services for residents, visitors, and workers. Horizontal and vertical integration stimulates economic development, fosters a sense of community, encourages walkability, and enhances the existing character of downtown.

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- B-3 Central Business District
- B-2 General Commercial District in specific locations adjacent to Downtown

Emphasis on Good Design

The City encourages all new development and redevelopment in the Central Business District to maintain the historic urban fabric and character.

Land Use Strategies

- Older buildings with architectural character and historical interest are important to the image of the entire community. The city encourages and supports adaptive reuse projects that retain and restore the historic character of the structure through incentives.
- The City will ensure all structures meet current building code standards to ensure the welfare and safety of the public.
- The City will encourage and enforce the use of active and vibrant ground floor spaces for retail and commerce.
- The City will continue to update rights-of-way throughout the downtown to enhance the pedestrian experience and allow for safer, more flexible public and pedestrian spaces.
- When appropriate, require a traffic study (to show anticipated traffic flows, amounts and required changes in the size, configuration or turning lanes of public roads directly serving or abutting the development).

BUSINESS PARK (BP)

BP areas generally will be located adjacent to I-57/I-70, State and US Highways. These areas provide an attractive setting for non-retail and non-industrial businesses and their support services. BP areas frequently buffer industrial areas from high visibility corridors, arterial streets and other development.

Permits office/warehouse uses, research and development, light manufacturing, and support and complementary uses; does not permit visible outside storage, display or operations. Strip development will be discouraged.

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- PUD-C Planned Unit Development – Commercial
- POM Planned Office and Limited Industrial District

Emphasis on Good Design

PUD-Cs must focus on the built environment and ensuring that it improves the area and enhances the surround area.

Land Use Strategies

- Encourage light industrial, research and development, tech, small-scale manufacturing, and corporate office uses that support job creation and economic diversification.
- Allow flexible building footprints and multi-tenant configurations to accommodate a range of business types and growth over time.
- Require orientation of loading docks and overhead doors away from public streets or residential areas.
- Use transitional buffers such as berming, setback depth, landscape screens, and fencing where business park uses abut residential or rural lands.
- Promote site design that directs internal truck circulation away from neighborhoods.
- Ensure adequate water, sewer, and stormwater capacity to support larger footprints and employment densities.

INDUSTRIAL (D)

This land use category is intended for heavy industrial, manufacturing, and warehousing uses that are typically incompatible with residential and retail uses. These uses often involve large facilities, semi-truck traffic, outdoor storage, and increased noise or environmental impacts. Expansion of Industrial uses is encouraged on the east side of I-57 from North of Dutch Land to the CSX railroad tracks. Additional smaller industrial areas will be located adjacent to the airport. These are intended for industrial activity and should limit encroachment by commercial uses not directly serving such industrial uses. .

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- POM Planned Office and Limited Industrial District
- M-1 Light Industrial District
- M-2 Heavy Industrial District

Emphasis on Good Design

The City encourages industrial districts to use design strategies that support long-term use and protect surrounding areas. This includes access to major transportation routes, buffered edges, flexible site layouts, and infrastructure for heavy use. Environmental controls and safety features help maintain property values and ensure compatibility with nearby land uses.

Land Use Strategies

- Industrial uses should be located away from residential areas and buffered from sensitive land uses through natural features, transitional zoning, or landscaping.
- The City supports continued development and expansion of the Business Park, ideally in the southern or southeastern portion of the community where traffic and infrastructure capacity can best accommodate large-scale operations.
- Infrastructure investments—including roadway improvements, utilities, and freight access—should support the long-term viability of designated industrial areas.
- Review the Zoning Ordinance to be more intentional on the location of light industrial uses (manufacturing and warehousing) and heavy industrial uses (concrete plants, outdoor storage, and similar uses with external impacts) utilizing special use permits and updates to the zoning district structure.

AIRPORT PLANNING AREA (APA)

Land uses around an airport should be considered so as to protect the public from the noise and safety hazards associated with air operations. Preferable uses are agricultural, industrial, and commercial. Noise levels are expected to increase with the new improvements and increased activity. Uses with large concentrations of people should not be permitted in the runway approach zone and departure areas. Residential developments, schools, churches and hospitals should not be located near an airport facility because they are noise sensitive.

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- B-2 General Commercial District
- POM Planned Office and Limited Industrial District
- M-1 Light Industrial District
- M-2 Heavy Industrial District

Aiport Protection Zone

This area is around the airport and has height restrictions and is a high noise area. The area will serve as an expansion area for Effingham County Memorial Airport and ancillary airport services.

Land Use Strategies

- Developments should be compatible with air traffic noise.
- Development in the Zone is subject to height restrictions and is a high noise area.
- Uses should support and serve the airport.

AIRPORT AIRSPACE (AA)

The FAA uses the approved ALP as the “plan on file” to protect the airspace when reviewing proposed development around 1H2.

- Airport Airspace Drawing: A drawing showing obstacle identification surfaces for the ultimate development as defined in FAR Part 77, Objects Affecting Navigable Airspace.
- Hazard to air navigation: An existing or proposed object that will have a substantial adverse effect upon the safe and efficient use of navigable airspace by aircraft.

An airport has corresponding protected areas along and at the ends of the runways. These surfaces are mandated and regulated by the Federal Aviation Administration. Land which falls under the Runway Safety Area, the Object Free Area and the Runway Protection Zone must be clear of other uses. These “surfaces” are defined in the Airport Layout Plan (ALP).

AIRPORT PLANNING AREA (APA)

Engineering drawings which layout the planned expansion area for improvements to runways, taxiways, hangars, etc.

MEDICAL DISTRICT (MD)

The Medical District focuses on healthcare services like hospitals, clinics, medical offices, and support uses such as pharmacies and wellness centers. It is designed for easy access with pedestrian paths, transit, and parking to serve patients and staff. The city encourages redevelopment of underused sites to improve the district's function and appearance, supporting mixed-use projects that enhance healthcare delivery.

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- R-3C Multiple-Dwelling District
- R-3D Multiple-Dwelling District
- Other Districts with Special Use Permit Approvals
- R-4 Limited Office and Retail District
- B-1 Neighborhood Shopping District
- B-2 General Commercial District

Emphasis on Good Design

The City encourages all new development and redevelopment in the Medical District to promote a modern, clean, and cohesive design character while supporting the district's role as a center for healthcare and innovation.

Land Use Strategies

- The city encourages adaptive reuse of existing buildings for medical or support services, especially those with architectural significance, and may offer incentives for projects that enhance the area's visual and functional quality.
- All development must meet current building and health code standards to ensure safety, accessibility, and modern functionality.
- Ground floor spaces along primary corridors should be activated with uses that serve both the public and medical community, such as pharmacies, cafes, or wellness services.
- The City will continue to improve public infrastructure, including sidewalks, lighting, and transit stops, to create a safe, comfortable, and accessible environment for patients, staff, and visitors.
- Appropriate location for nursing or convalescent homes, assisted living and rehabilitation facilities due to proximity to medical services.

PUBLIC / SEMI-PUBLIC (P)

The Public/Semi-Public District is dedicated to community-serving uses such as government offices, schools, libraries, religious institutions, and recreational facilities. This area is designed to be accessible and welcoming, with pedestrian-friendly connections and adequate parking. The City supports redevelopment and improvements that enhance public services and foster community engagement, encouraging mixed-use projects where appropriate.

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- All Zoning Districts

Emphasis on Good Design

The City promotes designs that reflect civic pride and community identity, emphasizing accessibility, transparency, and durability. New developments and renovations should complement the surrounding area and foster a welcoming environment for all users.

PARKS

Parks are publicly-owned recreational sites. Parks are generally located adjacent to residential development and with access to arterials, as well as areas utilized for Trail Recreation Effingham County (TREC).

Suitable Zoning Districts:

- All Zoning Districts

Land Use Strategies

- The City encourages adaptive reuse and modernization of existing public and semi-public buildings to better serve the community.
- All developments must meet current safety, accessibility, and building codes.
- Ground floors should remain active with uses that engage the public, such as community centers, libraries, or meeting spaces.
- Infrastructure improvements like sidewalks, lighting, and signage will be prioritized to enhance accessibility and safety.
- Work with the Park District and TREC to expand Park and Recreational Trail facilities.

FLOOD ZONE (FZ)

The Flood Zone is the established and regulated Floodway and fringe areas. Development, land use and activities are either prohibited or strictly regulated by Federal and State agencies.

Participation in the National Flood Insurance Program by the City of Effingham requires the City to regulate development the floodplain.

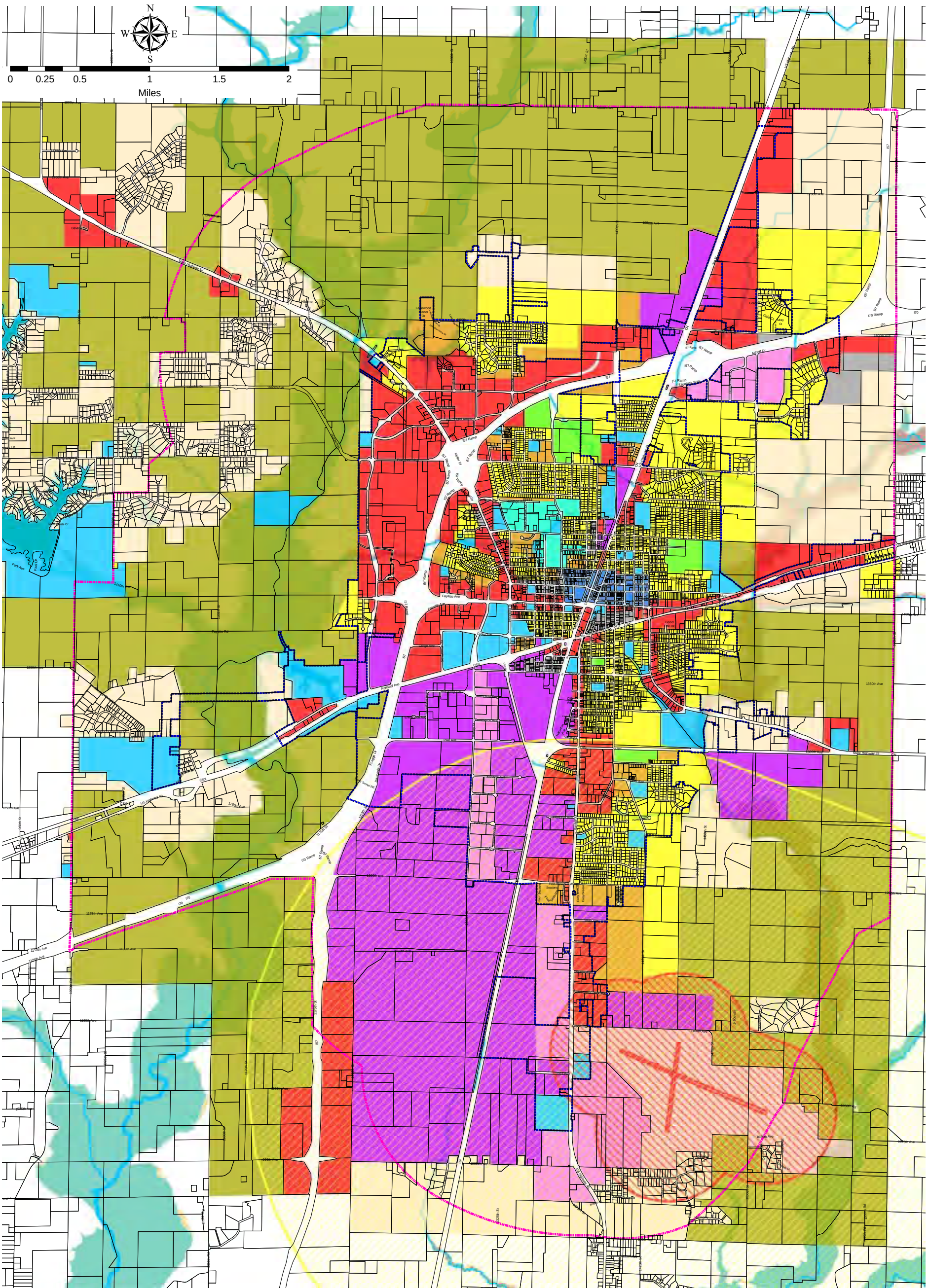
Will be protected from encroachment of inappropriate development.

The Floodplain Areas constrain development but offer opportunities as areas reserved and preserved for storm water drainage, wildlife habitats, natural vegetation, and limited recreation.

Land Use Strategies

- Development in the Flood Zone is prohibited or strict regulation on allowable uses and activities by Federal and State agencies with enforcement by the City.
- Regulations enforced by the City extend to the Extra-Territorial Zoning Jurisdiction.
- Uses in these areas should be limited to nature conservation area, woodlands, day use recreation areas without buildings, agricultural use.

FULL CITY MAP



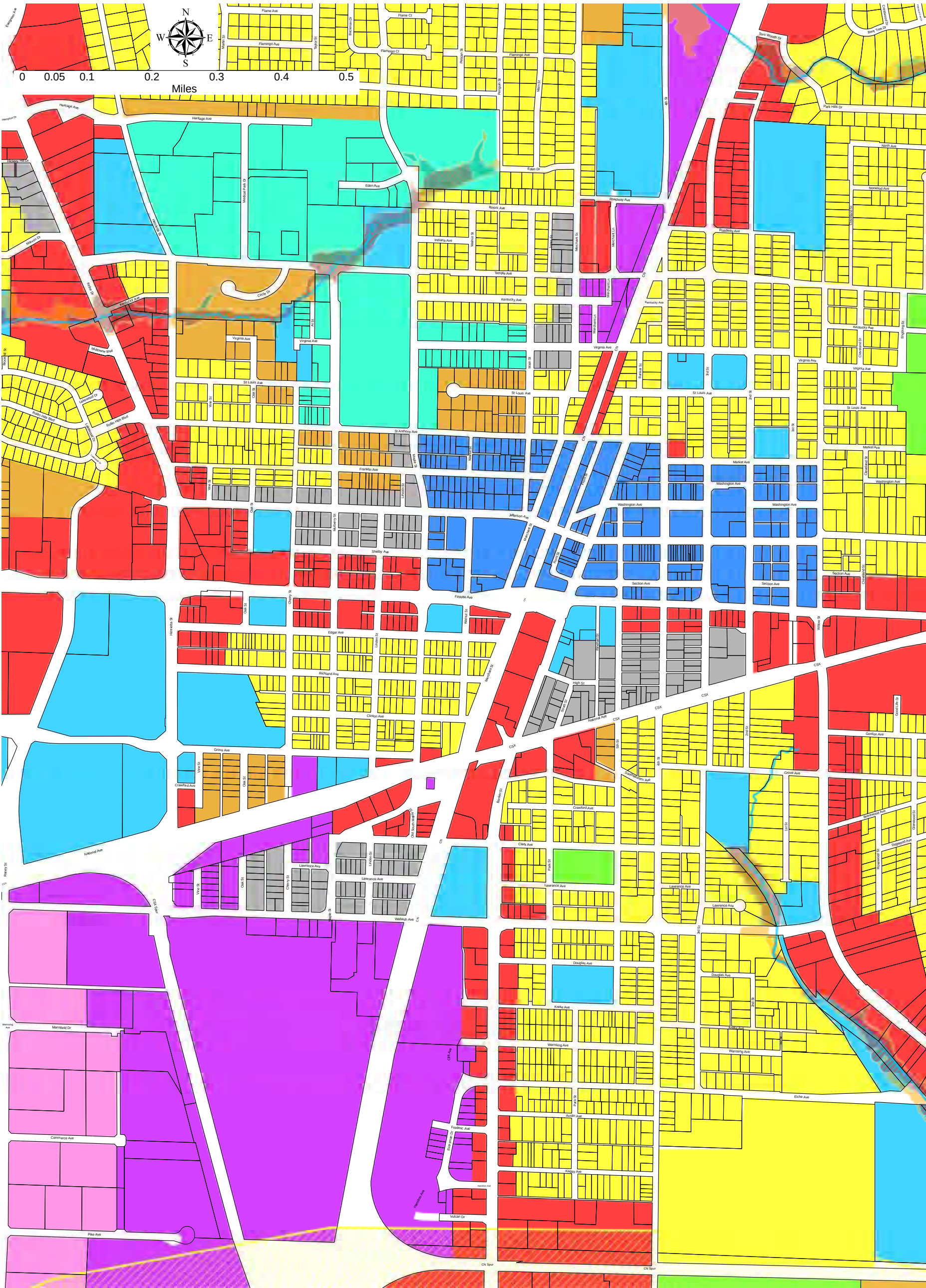
Future Land Use

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ET Limit | Airport Planning Area (APA) | Commercial (C) | Medium-High Density Residential (MHDR) | Public / Semi-Public (PSP) | Suburban Residential (SR) |
| Effingham | Business Park (BP) | Industrial (I) | Park (P) | Residential-Light Commercial (RLC) | Airport Protection Zone (APZ) |
| Central Business District (CBD) | Low-Mod Density Residential (LMDR) | Medical District (MD) | Rural-Agriculture (RUR) | Airport Airspace (AA) | |

Floodway

- | | | | | | |
|--------|----|-----|------------|--------------|-------|
| Rivers | A, | AE, | X, 0.2 PCT | AE, FLOODWAY | Water |
|--------|----|-----|------------|--------------|-------|

CENTRAL AREA MAP



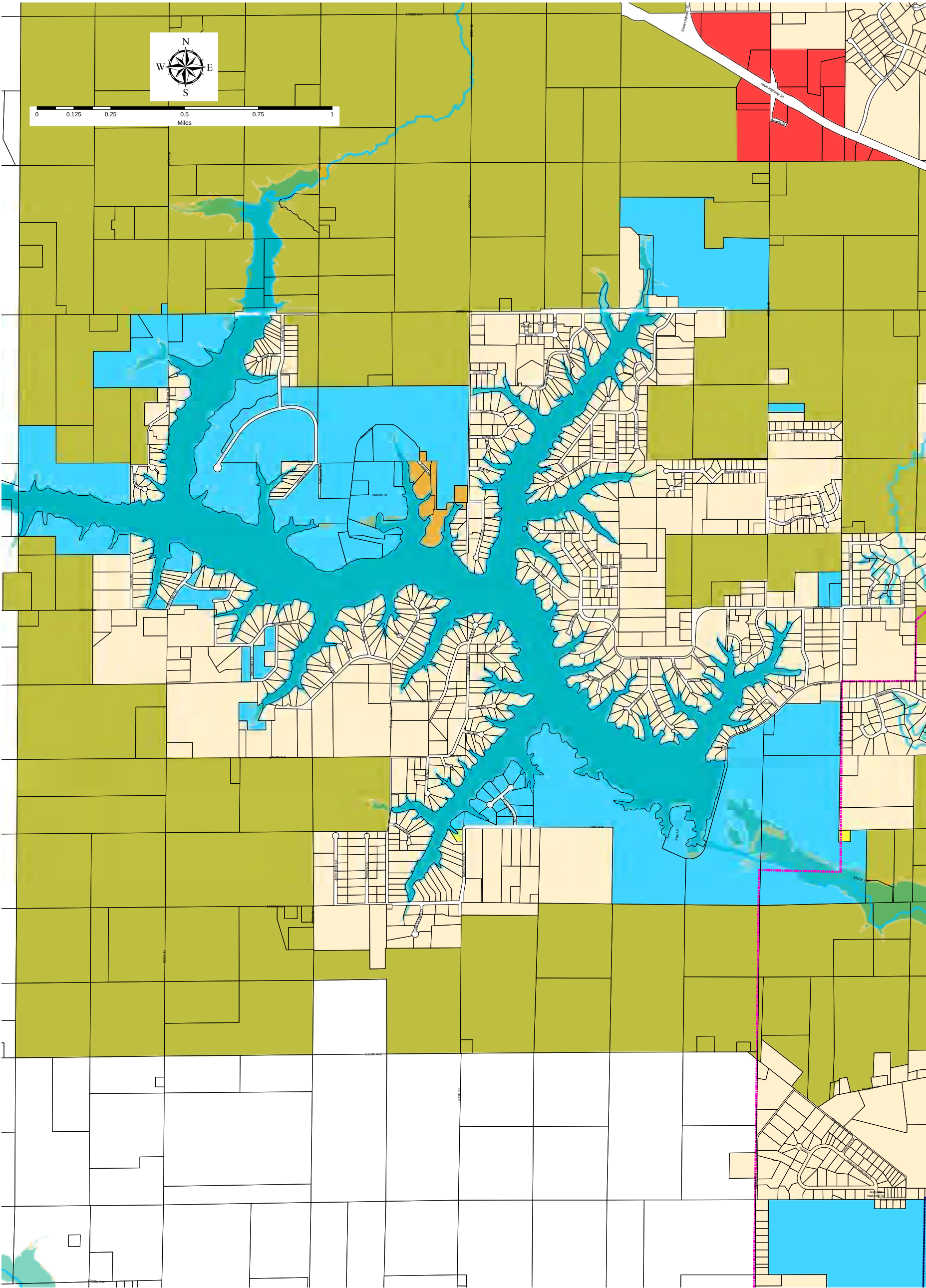
Future Land Use

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ET Limit | Airport Planning Area (APA) | Commercial (C) | Medium-High Density Residential (MHDR) | Public / Semi-Public (PSP) | Suburban Residential (SR) |
| Effingham | Business Park (BP) | Industrial (I) | Park (P) | Residential-Light Commercial (RLC) | Airport Protection Zone (APZ) |
| Central Business District (CBD) | Low-Mod Density Residential (LMDR) | Medical District (MD) | Rural-Agricultura (RUR) | Airport Airspace (AA) | |

Floodway

- | | | | | | |
|--------|----|-----|------------|--------------|-------|
| Rivers | A, | AE, | X, 0.2 PCT | AE, FLOODWAY | Water |
|--------|----|-----|------------|--------------|-------|

LAKE SARA AREA MAP



Future Land Use

-  ET Limit

 Effingham

 Central Business District (CBD)
-  Airport Planning Area (APA)

 Business Park (BP)

 Low-Mod Density Residential (LMDR)
-  Commercial (C)

 Industrial (I)

 Medical District (MD)
-  Medium-High Density Residential (MHDR)

 Park (P)

 Medical District (MD)
-  Public / Semi-Public (PSP)

 Residential-Light Commercial (RLC)

 Rural-Agricultura (RUR)
-  Suburban Residential (SR)

 Airport Protection Zone (APZ)

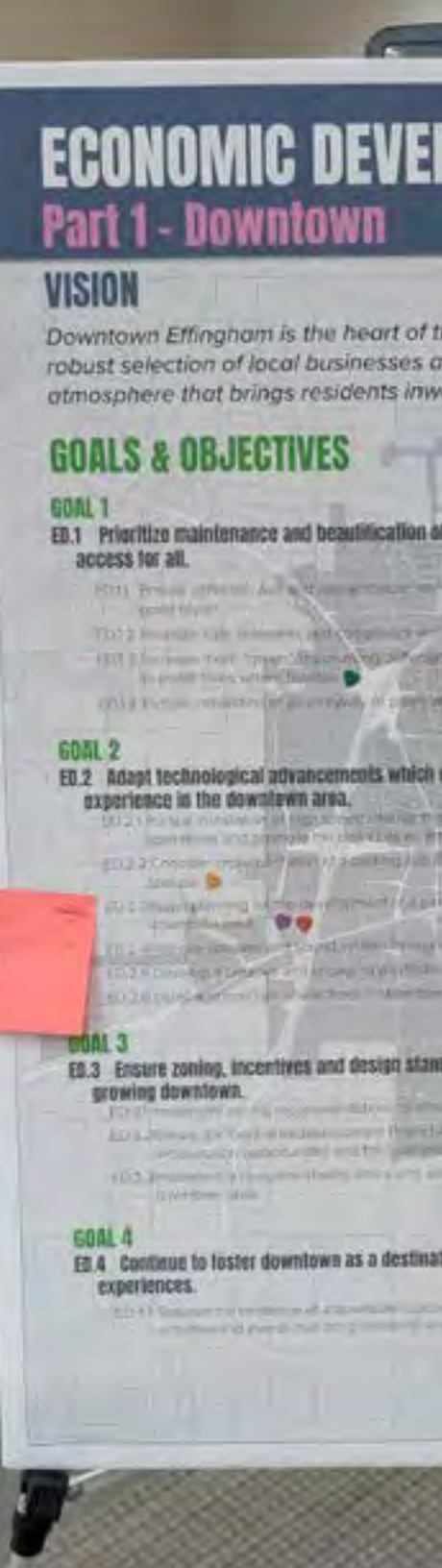
 Airport Airspace (AA)

Floodway

-  Rivers
-  A,
-  AE,
-  X, 0.2 PCT
-  AE, FLOODWAY
-  Water

5

IMPLEMENTATION



IMPLEMENTATION

GOING FROM PLAN TO ACTION

The implementation matrix on the following pages serves as the comprehensive plan’s action-oriented bridge between the long-term visions described in the previous sections and the daily reality. The matrix breaks down the goals in objectives and action steps and assigns responsibility, funding sources, timeframes and priorities.

GOAL						
PRIORITY LEVEL	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	
S = Short-term, 5 years M = Mid-term, 10 years L = Long-term, 20 years O = On-going	The part of the plan where this was identified.	A strategy to support the goal.	The specific, tangible action.	Local, State, Federal, and private resources to support the action.	Potential partners responsible for moving the action forward.	 Check when completed.

Additionally, throughout the process, specifically at the Open House, the Steering Committee and Public reviewed all the goals and objectives and identified the priorities for the City. These have been denoted with a teal star.★ However, if an action surfaced as particularly important or received a lot of attention, they have been denoted as a top priority with a pink star.★

Matrix Maintenance

This matrix should be **monitored** and **updated regularly**. An annual progress report will assist in checking off items which have been completed and re-evaluate timelines. It is also recommended that an in-depth evaluation of the plan’s progress occur every 5 years to adjust strategies based on new realities. To take it one step further, the City should publish an **Annual Report** of the City’s accomplishments after the matrix review. This may include action items checked, the number of housing units constructed, transportation and infrastructure projects completed, festivals held, and any other community achievements worth celebrating and publish on the website and social media sites.

SECTION 1. HOUSING

FUNDING & IMPLEMENTATION

GOAL 1: Advance the housing development infrastructure through capacity-building.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
	H.1.1	Create a multi-stakeholder community housing task force that builds on the work currently being done by the PAVE Housing Action Team.	Identify the actions of PAVE and other stakeholders to date and openly communicate future actions and coordinate ongoing efforts.	N/A	Planning, Economic Development, PAVE, Alliance, CSG (Community Support Group), Community	
	H.1.2	Increase Community participation with the City in the identification of priority sites for housing and/ or mixed-use development.	The Community and City work to identify and share prospective sites for residential development. Secure options to acquire the identified sites.	Public / Private (Alliance)	Planning, Economic Development, Community, PAVE, CSG, Alliance	
M	H.1.3	Identify one or more desired workforce housing projects and release an RFQ to spur developer interest.	One is currently in process. The City and the Community work with Developers on identifying additional sites and projects	Public / Private	Planning, Economic Development, PAVE, Alliance, CSG, Community, Effingham County Housing Authority, IDHA	
M	H.1.4	Create development guidance and blueprints for standard, pre-approved housing types that can be built more cost-effectively and quickly than those designed "from scratch."	Work with the Community (Developers, Home Builders, Architects) for the housing plans.	Public / Private	Planning, Economic Development, PAVE, Alliance, CSG, Community Home Builder's Association, Architects, Building Official	
O	H.1.5	Support public infrastructure improvements through Enterprise Zone, Business District and TIF District Funds for capacity-building developments.	Develop Infrastructure Extension Agreements / Special Service Areas using various public and private funding sources.	Public / Private	Planning, Economic Development, PAVE, Alliance, CSG, Community	
	H.1.6	Create a section on the City's website for housing development related information.	Identify a point person, available incentives, processes, and even accomplishments (number of residential building permits) for the year.	N/A	IT, Planning, Economic Development	

O	H.1.7	Continually monitor the changing housing development needs in Effingham.	The City will continue to monitor the housing needs and implement practices and procedures as recommended in the recent housing studies. The City should also monitor the effect of the current incentives (e.g., Enterprise Zone and Tax Increment Financing -TIF) as to its success, and modify programs accordingly	General Fund	Planning, Economic Development	
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GOAL 2: Strengthen the local housing ecosystem through local housing policies and updates to the municipal code.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
	H.2.1	Reduce barriers to development through strategic- zoning and subdivision ordinance update, review of building codes and enforcement.	Review of the existing ordinances by City Staff, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Community Groups and the Community.	N/A	Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, City Council, Community Groups, Community	
M	H.2.2	Create more development opportunities for second and third floor residential units Downtown.	Consider using Central TIF Funds to assist with Building, Fire Safety and other requirements for mixed use buildings. Consider more long term parking for the added residential.	Central Area TIF	Planning, Economic Development, Building Official, Fire Prevention Bureau, Community	
O	H.2.3	Identify populations that need affordable or workforce housing and where philanthropic or government funding/financing is available.	Review Census information and information from Housing Studies, IDHA (Illinois Housing Development Authority) and others. Work with government, private individuals and entities for funding.	Public / Private	Planning, Economic Development, ECHA (Effingham County Housing Authority), PAVE, Alliance, CSG, IDHA, Community	

GOAL 3: Promote well-designed, safe and connected neighborhoods by supporting infrastructure improvements, sustainable building practices and housing rehabilitation programs that preserve the character of existing neighborhoods and meet the needs of future residents.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
	H.3.1	Integrate green spaces, parks, and walking trails into new residential developments, ensuring that residents have access to outdoor recreational areas within walking distance of their homes.	Ask for community input on green space and neighborhood park requirements with new developments, this may be subdivision HOA dedication of a lot for a neighborhood park.	Private	Planning, Economic Development, PAVE, Alliance, CSG, Community, Park District, TREC	
O	H.3.2	Promote attractive streetscapes by encouraging tree planting, sidewalk connectivity, and the use of landscaping to enhance the neighborhood's aesthetic appeal.	Consider landscaping standards and plans for new developments. Recommended tree species in accordance with the Urban Forestry Management Plan. Non-typical aesthetically pleasing entryways and sidewalks.	Grant Funds, Private	Planning, Economic Development, PAVE, Alliance, CSG, Community	

0	H.3.3	Prioritize walkability and connectivity within neighborhoods by ensuring pedestrian-friendly infrastructure and safe routes to essential amenities such as schools, grocery stores, and public transportation.	Continue implementing the Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan,	ITEP, Safe Route to Schools, Public, Private	Planning, Economic Development, PAVE, Alliance, CSG, Community, TREC, IDOT	
★0	H.3.4	Support mixed-use developments that blend residential, retail, and recreational spaces, offering residents a vibrant and well-connected environment.	Encourage mixed use development – review current zoning ordinance uses	N/A, TIF, Business District, Private, Opportunity Zone	Planning, Economic Development, PAVE, Alliance, CSG, Community	
0	H.3.5	Ensure that all new residential developments have sufficient infrastructure including roads, utilities and public services to meet the needs of expanding neighborhoods.	Review, revise and enforce standards. Participate in agreements for public / private infrastructure extensions. Consider over-size agreements for water, sanitary sewer and higher standard street design. Adopt the County roadway requirements for roadways outside the City limits.	Public / Private	Planning, Economic Development, PAVE, Alliance, CSG, Community, County	

SECTION 2. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FUNDING & IMPLEMENTATION

GOAL 1: Prioritize maintenance and beautification of downtown and ensure safety and accessibility access for all.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
O	ED.1.1	Ensure Jefferson Avenue, Washington Avenue, Sections Avenue, Market Avenue and perpendicular streets between Maple Street and Willow Street are kept in a state of good repair.	Ongoing periodic evaluations of street and infrastructure condition. Updating the 5 yr Capital Improvement Plan	General Fund, Central TIF, Water, Sanitary Sewer	Public Works, Community	
O	ED.1.2	Prioritize safe sidewalks and compliance with all ADA standards when reconstructing sidewalks.	Ongoing periodic evaluations of sidewalks and ADA ramps in accordance with the ADA Transition Plan. Updating the 5 yr Capital Improvement Plan	General Fund, Central TIF	Public Works, IDOT, Community	
M	ED.1.3	Increase more “green” space along Jefferson Avenue by installing additional planters and pursue options to install trees where feasible.	Ongoing aesthetics updates being implemented.	General Fund, Central TIF	Public Works, Community, Downtown Business Group	
	ED.1.4	Pursue installation of an entryway or pillars at Banker Street and Jefferson Ave.	Ongoing aesthetics updates being implemented.	General Fund, Central TIF	Public Works, Community, Downtown Business Group	

GOAL 2: Adapt technological advancements which enhance the business environment and visitor experience in the downtown area.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
S	ED.2.1	Pursue installation of high-speed internet throughout the downtown area to improve business operations and promote the district as an attractive business location.	In progress by internet providers.	Private	Private Internet Providers, Downtown Business Group	
M	ED.2.2	Consider implementation of a parking app that allows users to see where there are open parking spaces.	Evaluate providers as the need develops.	General Fund, Central TIF	Public Works, Community, Downtown Business Group	
	ED.2.3	Begin planning for the development of a parking garage that will accommodate future growth to the downtown area.	Work with the County, Downtown Business Group and property owners to identify suitable locations as the need develops. Consider size, aesthetics and number of parking spaces, reserved vs. open.	General Fund, Central TIF, County, Alliance, Chamber, Grants	Public Works, Community, Downtown Business Group, Effingham County, Alliance, Chamber,	

	ED.2.4	Improve speaker and sound system throughout the area that can be used to enhance the downtown experience throughout the year.	Evaluate providers as the need develops.	General Fund, Central TIF	Public Works, Community, Downtown Business Group	
	ED.2.5	Develop a creative and engaging wayfinding system throughout the downtown area.	Evaluate apps/signage as the need develops.	General Fund, Central TIF	Public Works, Community, Downtown Business Group	
	ED.2.6	Install and maintain shade trees in downtown right-of-way and open spaces.	Evaluate and use recommended tree species in accordance with the Urban Forestry Management Plan.	General Fund, Central TIF	Public Works, Community, Downtown Business Group	

GOAL 3: Ensure zoning, incentives and design standards help to create a vibrant, pleasant, and growing downtown.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
	ED.3.1	Implement zoning recommendations to enhance development in the downtown district.	Review of the existing ordinances by City Staff, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Community Groups and the Community.	N/A	Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, City Council, Community, Downtown Business Group	
	ED.3.2	Ensure the Central Redevelopment TIF District is maintained and continues to provide rehabilitation opportunities and business facade improvement programs.	Review current programs to ensure the goals of improving the downtown are maintained.	N/A	Planning, Economic Development	
	ED.3.3	Implement an expanded B-3 Zoning District to relieve parking restraints and spur commercial and residential development	Review of the existing ordinances by City Staff, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Community Groups and the Community. Consider changing the existing zoning to the limits of Maple Street to Willow Street and Fayette Avenue to St. Anthony Avenue.	N/A	Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, City Council, Community, Downtown Business Group	
	ED.3.4	Create a new Zoning District (B-3a) to provide a smooth transition from B-3 to B-2 Zoning Districts.	Review of the existing ordinances by City Staff, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Community Groups and the Community. The new zoning district is intended for areas adjacent to the Downtown and Expanded Downtown.	N/A	Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, City Council, Community, Downtown Business Group	

GOAL 4: Continue to foster downtown as a destination - a place for community gathering and cultural experiences.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
	ED.4.1	Encourage the existence of a downtown business organization dedicated to supporting and promoting activities and events that bring residents and visitors downtown.	Maintain communication, foster enthusiasm of the benefits of a Downtown Business Group. Continue promoting and cooperation with Downtown events and activities. Promote amenities of the Downtown.	N/A	Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, City Council, Community, Downtown Business Group, Chamber, Tourism	

GOAL 5: Pursue funding for the development of an underpass or overpass on South Banker Street at the east-west rail crossing.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
	ED.5.1	Coordinate with Illinois Department of Transportation on planning and funding the underpass or overpass.	Initiate studies on design that maintain access to adjacent businesses.	City, State, Federal, Railroad	Public Works, City Council, IDOT, CSX Railroad	
	ED.5.2	Start including the project on the 5-year plan with IDOT.	Meet with IDOT and USDOT to initiate studies on feasibility and funding sources.	City, State, Federal, Railroad	Public Works, City Council, IDOT, CSX Railroad	
M	ED.5.3	Coordinate with businesses to ensure plans allow for access or continued success of existing business.	Initiate studies to determine best design to maintain access to business – convenient and safe.	City, State, Federal, Railroad	Public Works, City Council, IDOT, CSX Railroad, Economic Development	

GOAL 6: Pursue funding for the Ford Avenue extension and roundabout at the intersection of 4th Street and Rickelman Avenue.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
O	ED.6.1	Continue to promote available incentives and grants for development.	Work with developers on applications, required information and data,	Business District, Enterprise Zone, DCEO, IDOT/ Federal, CDBG, EDA, EDP	Public Works, City Council, Alliance, Community, Private	
O	ED.6.2	Continue to invest in critical infrastructure to support development.	Continue applying for grants and to other funding sources at the regional, State and Federal level.	Business District, Enterprise Zone, DCEO, IDOT/ Federal, CDBG, EDA, EDP	Public Works, City Council, Alliance, Community, Private	

GOAL 7: Promote quality development for the revitalization of the Village Square Mall.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
S	ED.7.1	Review development codes and ordinances to ensure zoning promotes desired development in the area.	Consider revisions to codes and ordinances that promote a redevelopment beneficial to the entire community.	TIF, Business District, Enterprise Zone	Planning, Economic Development, Building Official, Public Works, Alliance, Community, Development Group	
S	ED.7.2	Incentivize developers through funding programs to promote business and residential developments.	Ensure public funds are invested in redevelopment that is in the best interests of the community. Consider incentives to promote residential dwellings with the redevelopment.	TIF, Business District, Enterprise Zone	Planning, Economic Development, Building Official, Public Works, Alliance, Community, Development Group	

GOAL 8: Support the construction of an additional power substation on the south side of Effingham to accommodate future development.

GOAL 9: Support commercial and industrial retention, growth and development in business districts and along commercial corridors to promote Effingham as a business and industry destination.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
S	ED.9.1	Encourage regional commercial development to cluster at major arterial street intersections and at the interchanges to efficiently serve the needs of the traveling public.	Review zoning districts and allowable uses in these areas to encourage the desired development and redevelopment.	N/A	Planning, Economic Development, Development Groups, Alliance, Community, City Council	
S	ED.9.2	Encourage commercial development in rural areas to small-scale sales and services that directly assist and serve agricultural and rural interests.	Review zoning districts and allowable uses to encourage and limit commercial development to scale in the rural areas. Available infrastructure may limit the scale of development.	N/A	Planning, Economic Development, Development Groups, Community, City Council	
	ED.9.3	Actively recruit quality retailers to meet community needs.	Attend trade shows and conventions to meet businesses, communicate with private developers on prospective businesses.	N/A	Planning, Economic Development, Development Groups, Community, City Council	

GOAL 10: Modify land use classifications and bulk standards within zoning regulations and adhere to best practices in heavy industrial areas. Consider defining an implementing the M-1, M-2 and M-3 zoning districts.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
S	ED.10.1	Encourage the development of neighborhood retail sales and services to be clustered to serve adjacent residential development and away from industrial areas.	Review the Future Land Use definitions and Map to identify these areas. Review Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances for revisions to requirements to encourage less intensive commercial development in these areas.	N/A	Planning, Economic Development, Public Works, Community, Developers, City Council	
S	ED.10.2	Buffer heavy industrial area from high visibility corridors with business parks and other developments that project a more attractive image of Effingham.	Review the Future Land Use definitions and Map to identify these areas. Review Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances for revisions to requirements to encourage less intensive commercial development in these areas. Business Park aesthetics and landscaping requirements.	N/A	Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, City Council, Community, Developers	
L	ED.10.3	Maintain an efficient network of industrial streets providing access to major arterials, I-57/I-70 Corridor, railroads and the Airport.	Identify future streets (collectors and arterials) and explore funding for studies and preliminary design for these alignments.	City, County, DCEO, IDOT/Federal, CDBG, EDA, EDP	Public Works, Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, City Council, County, Community, Developers	

0	ED.10.4	Expand industrial opportunities near Dutch Lane, Route 45 (South of the Airport), and Raney Street.	Review the Future Land Use definitions and Map to identify these areas. Identify future streets (collectors and arterials) and explore funding for studies and preliminary design for these alignments.	N/A	Public Works, Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Economic Development, County, IDOT, City Council, Community, Developers	
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GOAL 11: Attract a diverse array of commercial and industrial businesses that strengthen the sustainability of the regional economy. Primarily attracting those businesses with environmental awareness.

GOAL 12: Ensure the School District and additional educational opportunities are supported through proper funding and resources while encouraging growth.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
0	ED.12.1	Actively cooperate and work with the Chamber of Commerce, the Schools, Lake Land College, and area business and industry to encourage training programs to help the labor force maintain the latest technical skills needed.	Maintain close communications with school boards and private school leaders to explore various and creative means available for the City to support education and workforce training.	TIF, Public/Private partnerships	Chamber of Commerce, Alliance, School Districts, LLC, CTEC, CORE, Economic Development, Business Community, Community, City Council	
0	ED.12.2	Assess where assistance can be provided when pursuing facility development or increasing educational opportunities.	Maintain close communications with school boards and private school leaders on facility needs and ideal locations. Explore new and innovative technologies that require training and retraining the workforce.	TIF, Public/Private partnerships	Chamber of Commerce, Alliance, School Districts, LLC, CTEC, CORE, Economic Development, Business Community, Community, City Council	
★0	ED.12.3	Promote the Effingham Community as an innovator in the continuous educational industry through informational materials and social media.	Participate in trade shows, conventions, job fairs to promote educational opportunities in the Community.	TIF, Public/Private partnerships	Chamber of Commerce, Alliance, School Districts, LLC, CTEC, CORE, Economic Development, Business Community, Community, City Council	
0	ED.12.4	Help to connect businesses and industries to the educational opportunities available through Lake Land College and continually assess new skills and knowledge that will be needed for the future.	Participate in trade shows, conventions, job fairs to promote educational opportunities in the Community. Foster gatherings of business and industry leaders with Lake Land College programs, courses of study to promote job shadowing, internships, career days.	TIF, Public/Private partnerships	Chamber of Commerce, Alliance, School Districts, LLC, CTEC, CORE, Economic Development, Business Community, Community, City Council	

GOAL 12: Provide a high-quality community environment for businesses and industries to attract and retain employees.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	
	ED.13.1	When pursuing housing goals ensure they are aligned with the needs of the existing and future workforce.	Promote public/private investment in work force housing. Continue Enterprise Zone, Opportunity Zone programs. Consider Housing Study recommendations and periodically update Housing studies to monitor progress. Identify funding sources.	Public/Private partnerships, EZ, OZ, TIF, IDHA	Planning, Economic Development, PAVE, Alliance, CSG, Community, City Council	
	ED.13.2	Support cooperation among various districts like the schools, park district and library to build and develop great educational, recreational and cultural offerings to improve overall quality of life.	Maintain communication with the various districts to monitor programs and identify additional opportunities. Expand on recent programs such as FFA, Shop classes, skilled trades.	Public/Private partnerships, LLC, School, Park and Library.	School Districts, Library, Park District, Chamber, Alliance, Community	
	ED.13.3	Encourage development of new daycare options and ensure there are no additional limitations beyond those enforced by the state.	Review current Zoning and Land Use regulations for Public and Private daycare.	N/A	Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, City Council, Community, Developers, Day Care Providers	

SECTION 3. COMMUNITY SERVICES & UTILITIES

FUNDING & IMPLEMENTATION

GOAL 1: Appropriately provide funding for public safety services to address current population, external safety considerations and future growth.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
L	CS.1.1	Evaluate and plan for location and future staffing needs for an additional fire station on the north side.	Study and determine the best location based on response times and other factors. Secure best site with purchase or option to acquire. Review staffing based on established criteria and operations.	General Fund	Administration, Planning, Public Works, Fire Department, City Council	
M	CS.1.2	Review the costs and consider the addition of police officer positions or a reorganization that would provide additional police presence at community events requiring City services.	Work with FOP to reorganize that would allow for additional on-street personnel per shift.	General Fund	Administration, Police Department, City Council	
O	CS.1.3	Maintain open communication with the fire and police department regarding potential annexations or large- scale developments that could result in a large increase in population.	Continue to include all departments on potential large scale annexations with an existing sizable population and residential development.	General Fund	Administration, Planning, Public Works, Police Department, Fire Department, City Council	
O	CS.1.4	Consider police staffing to account for unique demands and our locality. Calls for Service, Time on Task, Relief Factors, Organization Structure.	Study and evaluate staffing needs. Monitor population growth and needs for service.	General Fund	Administration, Police Department, City Council	
O	CS.1.5	Consider firefighter staffing for the total service population (residents, daytime workers, hotel guests, and transient traffic and performance-based standards like NFPA 1710. Fire Dept staffing for EMA Transport	Study and evaluate staffing needs. Monitor population growth and needs for service.	General Fund	Administration, Fire Department, City Council	
O	CS.1.6	Consider increasing support staffing and services to ensure compliance with required state and federal laws.	Monitor the requests for service with current staffing and implement accordingly. Look into new technology to assist.	General Fund	Administration, Fire Department, Police Department, City Council	
M	CS.1.7	Consider HAZMAT team for local support.	Work with regional fire departments/fire protection districts and State agencies to progress to a local HAZMAT Team.	General Fund	Administration, Fire Department, City Council, EMS	

M	CS.1.8	Consider funding to create a full-time EMS position.	Evaluate the duties and responsibilities of EMA and identify additional potential duties with Fire, Police and Public Works Departments.	General Fund	Administration, Fire Department, Police Department, City Council, EMS	
M	CS.1.9	Identify resources and opportunities to assist in the growth of the Emergency Operations Center and the possibility of acquiring a mobile communications unit. It would be available for both Police and Fire and would serve as a mobile dispatch center if needed.	Evaluate the needs to enhance the Emergency Operations Center to a fully functioning Center. Explore grant opportunities for a Mobile Unit.	General Fund, State, Federal	Administration, Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, City Council, EMS	
O	CS.1.10	Ensure the useful life of police and fire department vehicles are tracked and funds are planned in advance to replace vehicles when necessary.	Continue to implement the 5 year Capital Improvements program and periodic vehicle inspections to schedule vehicle replacements	General Fund	Administration, Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, City Council, EMS	

GOAL 2: Consistently review and consider needs for new facilities as the City grows in population and in potential square mileage through annexation.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
L	CS.2.1	Consider upgrades of Central Station and an additional location where services can be expanded - Ideally near Fourth Street and Rickelman Avenue.	Study and determine the needed improvements, for example additional administration offices, for the Central Station and Station 2. Study and identify the best location based on response times and other factors. Secure best site with purchase or option to acquire.	General Fund	Administration, Fire Department, City Council,	
L	CS.2.2	Consider redevelopment of the fire department training facility and include facilities for police training.	Evaluate training needs for Fire, Police, Public Works and EMS in the redevelopment of the Training Center.	General Fund	Administration, Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, City Council,	
L	CS.2.3	Consider expansion of the short-term municipal holding facility to address future needs.	The new Police Station has adequate holding facilities but the future need shall be monitored and evaluated. Consideration should be given to additional modifications for separation and other needs.	General Fund	Administration, Police Department, City Council, County Sheriff	
O	CS.2.4	Work with County to ensure the jail is included in the County's capital improvement plan to accommodate the upgrades and repairs needed to for the facility.	Maintain a good working relationship with the Sheriff's Department on facility and operation and modification when needed to address other issues such as mental health and substance abuse.	County	Administration, Police Department, City Council, County Sheriff	

O	CS.2.5	Ensure the City's Capital Improvement plan is reviewed and updated frequently to make sure projects are being considered when necessary.	Continue to publicly present the Capital Improvement Plan for community input. Involve all Departments in development and updates to the Plan.	N/A	Administration, All Departments	
GOAL 3: Maintain and grow healthy partnerships with public and private organizations that provide additional public safety services within or around the City.						
	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	
O	CS.3.1	Strategically reduce the amount of "non-serviced" fire protection areas around the City to ensure there are no gaps in service.	Work with adjacent Fire Protection Districts and the County to offer the un-protected areas coverage.	N/A	Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, City Council, Fire Department, Fire Protection Districts	
	CS.3.2	Work with the fire department to encourage EMR / EMT training for all firefighters.	Work with Administration and current Fire Department personnel to develop a training program for EMR/EMT. Require new hires to have EMR/EMT training.	General Fund	Administration, Fire Department, City Council,	
O	CS.3.3	Partner with the Sheriff's office to continue existing or establish new services that address unique challenges the area faces including, but not limited to, the County's rescue dive team.	Continue Mutual Aid agreements between City and County for services: Dive Team, EMS and others.	N/A	Administration, Police Department, City Council, County Sheriff	
O	CS.3.4	Identify resources available in the County and coordinate with Public Works Departments for equipment sharing in emergencies.	Maintain a good working relationship with County to share resources as appropriate.	N/A	Administration, Public Works, County Maintenance, County Engineer	
O	CS.3.5	Continue to be a member of IPWMAN mutual aid services for Public Works.	Yes and continue with leadership positions as a Board member and promote Public Works Mutual Aid statewide.	N/A	Administration, Public Works,	
O	CS.3.6	Pursue agreements with other departments and communities to provide shelters, supplies and resources to the greater community when needed.	Continue to expand on current agreements with community wide entities such as schools, churches and others.	N/A	Administration, Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, City Council, EMS, Community	
S	CS.3.7	Develop a volunteering program for community members to train and assist with emergency responses.	Work with EMS, Fire, Police and Public Works Departments to have a readily available volunteer group.	N/A	Administration, Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, City Council, EMS, Community	
O	CS.3.8	Frequently evaluate the contracts for EMS services and ensure services are being provided appropriately.	Work with the community to continue the contracts and identify volunteers to provide minimum services.	N/A	Administration, Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, City Council, EMS, Community	

S	CS.3.9	Work with EMS contractor to support resources and opportunities to train and grow medic staff, including the general public.	Work with medical providers to assist with training volunteers with first aid and trauma treatment in the event of a disaster.	N/A	Administration, Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, City Council, EMS, Community	
O	CS.3.10	Continue to work with the County to provide City and County 911 services.	Monitor the good working relationship between Effingham County 911 and First Responders,	General Fund, County, County 911	Administration, Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, City Council, EMS, County, County 911, Community	
O	CS.3.11	Continue to partner with funeral homes to provide mortuary services when morgue capacity is at its limit.	The new County Morgue Facility should alleviate this concern except in the case a natural disaster or other mass casualty event.	County	County Coroner	
GOAL 4: Invest in and modernize community service infrastructure—such as libraries, health facilities, and senior centers—to ensure access, long- term sustainability, and adaptability to future needs.						
	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
O	CS.4.1	Pursue state and federal funding opportunities to support the renovation and expansion of community service infrastructure.	Identify the Community needs, work with the community to apply for grants. Explore community investment in enhances community services.	Public/Private	Administration, City Council, State, Federal, Chamber, Community	
O	CS.4.2	Establish technology upgrade schedules to ensure public access computers, software, and other digital tools remain current and functional.	Review current technology and software to identify a replacement and upgrade schedule.	Library, TIF	Administration, City Council, Library, State, Federal, Chamber, Community	
O	CS.4.3	Create community engagement processes to gather input from diverse residents on desired services, programming, and facility features.	Continue to conduct public, open forum meetings to provide for easy exchange of ideas and comments.	N/A	Administration, City Council,	
S	CS.4.4	Encourage local healthcare providers and nonprofits to work with libraries, recreation centers, and senior facilities to expand health and wellness programming	Assist with marketing services provided by local healthcare providers on health and wellness programs. Encourage healthy living practices.	General Fund	HSBS, SBLHC, Library, Park District, Senior Center, Chamber, Community	
O	CS.4.5	Pursue all community facilities meet ADA accessibility standards and explore enhancements that go beyond compliance to serve residents of all physical and cognitive abilities.	Educate the community on ADA Accessibility Standards and work with facilities to make ADA improvements to better serve the community.	N/A	Administration, Public Works, Building Official	

GOAL 5: Prioritize investments in maintaining, upgrading and expanding utility systems to meet future demands of residential, commercial and industrial development

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
O	CS.5.1	Develop a long-range utility infrastructure plan that aligns with projected residential, commercial and industrial growth patterns.	Continue to use the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan to identify and implement improvements. Maintain coordination with Public Utility Companies.	General, Water and Sewer, TIF, BD, Grants, Private	Planning, Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies	
O	CS.5.2	Coordinate utility upgrades with land use planning and economic development efforts to ensure infrastructure investments support priority growth areas.	Continue to use the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan to identify and implement improvements. Identify priority growth areas. Maintain coordination with Public Utility Companies.	General, Water and Sewer, TIF, BD, Grants, Private	Planning, Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies	
O	CS.5.3	Continue to prioritize replacement of aging infrastructure—including water mains, sewer lines, stormwater facilities and electric components—with modern, resilient systems that reduce maintenance costs and service disruptions.	Continue to use the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan to identify and implement improvements. Identify priority growth areas. Maintain coordination with Public Utility Companies.	General, Water and Sewer, TIF, BD, Grants, Private	Planning, Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies	
O	CS.5.4	Pursue funding opportunities and public-private partnerships to support utility expansion and modernization without overburdening local ratepayers.	Continue to use the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan to identify and implement improvements. Identify priority growth areas. Maintain coordination with Public Utility Companies.	General, Water and Sewer, TIF, BD, Grants, Private	Planning, Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies	
O	CS.5.5	Promote coordination among utility providers to ensure that expansion efforts are timely, cost-effective, and minimally disruptive to the community.	Continue to use the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan to identify and implement improvements. Identify priority growth areas. Maintain coordination with Public Utility Companies.	General, Water and Sewer, TIF, BD, Grants, Private	Planning, Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies	
O	CS.5.6	Establish utility performance monitoring systems to track usage, detect issues early, and ensure long-term efficiency.	Continue to use the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan to identify and implement improvements. Identify priority growth areas. Maintain coordination with Public Utility Companies.	General, Water and Sewer, TIF, BD, Grants, Private	Planning, Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies	
O	CS.5.7	Ensure the City's Capital Improvement plan is reviewed and updated frequently to make sure projects, such as Water Mains appropriately sized for Fire ISO, are being considered when necessary.	Continue to use the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan to identify and implement improvements. Identify priority growth areas. Maintain coordination with Public Utility Companies.	General, Water and Sewer, TIF, BD, Grants, Private	Planning, Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies	
S	CS.5.8	Work with Electric Utility operators on improvements to the grid.	Make contact with electrical companies and identify areas for grid expansion / improvement.	General, Grants, Private	Planning, Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies	

S	CS.5.9	Identify and possibly acquire locations for new cell tower.	Ensure sites and surrounding sites are compatible for tall structures.	General, TIF	Public Works, Economic Development, Developers,	
S	CS.5.10	Review cell tower aesthetic requirements to ensure skyline protection.	Ensure requirements allow for construction, but protect surrounding uses and neighborhoods.	General	Economic Development	
GOAL 6: Adopt environmentally responsible practices and technologies to ensure long-term sustainability and resilience of utility services.						
	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
O	CS.6.1	Incorporate renewable energy sources—such as solar, wind, or geothermal—into public utility operations and explore opportunities for community-scale energy projects.	Continue to explore options for renewable energy sources to complement current uses in public utility operations. Review land use regulations for the integration of solar, wind and geothermal but protect and preserve existing commercial and industrial developed and developing areas and preserve prime agricultural land.	General	Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies	
O	CS.6.2	Upgrade water and wastewater systems with energy-efficient pumps, leak detection technologies, and water reuse capabilities to reduce environmental impact and operating costs.	Continue monitoring and periodic maintenance, use the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan for timely replacement with more efficient equipment. Review operations for reduction and reuse of water and other resources.	General, Water, Sewer	Public Works, Economic Development, Utility Companies	
S	CS.6.3	Integrate green infrastructure and sustainable utility practices, such as rain gardens, permeable pavement, and energy-efficient technologies.	Review and develop standards to promote the use of energy-efficient technologies.	General	Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies	
M	CS.6.4	Promote conservation programs that encourage residents and businesses to reduce water and energy use through available incentives, education, and smart technology.	Investigate programs available, use media, social media, Town Hall meetings to educate and increase awareness of programs and new technology.	General, Water	Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies, City Council	
O	CS.6.5	Adopt smart grid and metering technologies to improve energy efficiency, manage demand, and provide customers with real-time usage data.	City does not do Electric. Continue using and upgrading technology as needed. City uses it for water service.	General, Water	Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies, City Council	
O	CS.6.7	Partner with regional and state agencies to pilot innovative utility technologies and access funding for green infrastructure improvements.	Identify agencies and new technologies. Work with the community and utility companies on grant applications.	State, Federal, Private	Public Works, Economic Development, Developers, Community, Utility Companies, Other Agencies	

SECTION 4. TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY

FUNDING & IMPLEMENTATION

GOAL 1: Prioritize new transportation infrastructure projects that will help improve traffic flow, capacity and safety.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
	T.1.1	Complete Ford Avenue extension to 4th Street.	Complete design and secure funding, continue submitting grant applications.	General, IDOT, USDOT, Grants	City, State, Federal, County, Township	
	T.1.2	Complete roundabout at Rickelman Avenue and 4th Street.	Complete design and secure funding, continue submitting grant applications.	General, IDOT, USDOT, Grants	City, State, Federal, County, Township	
	T.1.3	Complete extension of Heritage Avenue to Maple Street.	Design and secure funding. Submit grant applications.	General, Grants, Private	City, Developers	
	T.1.4	Pursue development of an underpass or overpass on South Banker Street at the east- west rail	Work with IDOT and Railroad on studies to determine options and evaluate considering traffic flow, traffic counts and maintaining access to adjacent businesses. IDOT 5 year plan.	General, Grants, TIF, BD	City/Railroad/IDOT/USDOT/ Grants	
L	T.1.5	Pursue potential for development of a roundabout at Evergreen and 4th Street.	Work with IDOT and Railroad on studies to determine options and evaluate considering traffic flow, traffic counts and maintaining access to adjacent businesses.	General, Grants	City/State	
O	T.1.6	Continue to make enhancement of the transportation circulation system a community priority.	Continue to review and monitor traffic patterns and counts. Ensure traffic is studied and evaluated with new development, especially large traffic/trip generators – traffic studies will be required. Make plans for timely improvements in the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan.	All and Any	City, IDOT, Developers, Community	
O	T.1.7	Implement 2018 N. Keller Drive traffic study recommendations.	Review the study and use the 5 year Capital Improvements Plan to plan improvements. Consult the study when development or redevelopment is proposed.	General, BD	City/State	

GOAL 2: Prioritize new transportation infrastructure projects that will help improve traffic flow, capacity and safety.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
O	T.2.1	Continue to pursue development of a southern interchange for I-57/I-70.	Work with State and Federal agencies on planning and funding sources. Initiate garnering public and community support for the project – especially the companies in the Business Park and adjacent property owners.	General, State, Federal, Grants	City/State/Federal	
M	T.2.2	Identify opportunities to develop an Outer Belt East that will connect the area around the airport to Crystal Club Road providing access to the north area of the City.	Initiate a corridor study to identify the best route. Engage the community, State and Federal Agencies for support of the project with the purpose to provide a convenient route for commercial traffic to bypass congestion in the City.	General, State, Federal, Grants	City/Township, County/State/Federal	
M	T.2.3	Extend Jaycee Avenue to Crystal Club Road to help create a full connection for the Outer Belt East into all areas of the City.	Initiate a corridor study to identify the best route. Engage the community, State and Federal Agencies for support of the project with the purpose to provide a convenient route access to highways and interstates.	General, State, Federal, Grants	City/Township, County/State/Federal	
M	T.2.4	Create connections to Lake Sara via Fayette Avenue to the south and County Road 1550 to the north.	Initiate a corridor study to identify the best route. Engage with Lake Sara community to garner support.	General, State, Federal, Grants	City/Township, County/State/Federal	
M	T.2.5	Extend Evergreen Avenue to Crystal Club Road (Missing Mile Project) to open up east-west access on the northern part of the City.	Review the previous planning for the roadway and multi-use trail extension and engage the community, State and Federal Agencies, Village of Teutopolis – connection to Outer Belt East.	General, State, Federal, Grants	City/Township, County/State/Federal	

GOAL 3: Ensure safe and reliable road, sidewalk and bike networks by meeting design standards and prioritizing funding for improvements and infrastructure.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
S	T.3.1	Revise, update or implement a Complete Streets Policy.	Review current Complete Street Policy and revise as needed.	General	Public Works, Administration, City Council	
O	T.3.2	Implement Safe Routes to School programs that combine targeted infrastructure upgrades with safety education and encouragement campaigns.	Continue implementing Safe Routes to Schools upgrades in infrastructure improvements near schools and in the community as a whole. Implement emphasis on locations near new schools.	General	Public Works, Administration, City Council, School Districts, Community	
S	T.3.3	Pursue sidewalk updates or development in alignment with ADA standards when completing any street reconstruction.	Revise and update the ADA Transition Plan to ensure street improvements are in accordance with current ADA requirements.	General	Public Works, Administration, City Council, Community	

O	T.3.4	Continually study system capacities and maintain a five-year capital improvements programs while pursuing grant and funding opportunities to complete projects.	Continue to review and monitor traffic patterns and counts. Ensure traffic is studied and evaluated with new development, especially large traffic/trip generators – traffic studies will be required. Make timely plans for timely improvements in the 5 year Capital Improvement Plan	General	Public Works, Administration, City Council, School Districts, Community	
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GOAL 4: Connect existing sidewalks and bikeways to key destinations, as the community evolves, for both transportation and recreation.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
O	T.4.1	Upgrade key crossings and intersections— especially near schools, highways, and railroads—for improved safety and accessibility.	Continue to review and monitor traffic patterns and counts. Evaluate condition and required standards to ensure compliance.	General, Railroad	Public Works, Administration, City Council, School Districts, Community, State, Railroads	
S	T.4.2	Add wayfinding signs and pavement markings to guide users and reinforce visibility.	Evaluate pavement markings annually and continue annual stripping program. Coordinate with Business groups and Tourism on need for wayfinder signs.	General, Tourism, Private	Public Works, Administration, City Council, Community, Tourism	
O	T.4.3	Coordinate with IDOT and developers to incorporate bike and pedestrian improvements into planned road and land development projects.	Review IDOT 5 year plan and City 5 year plan to identify needed and desired improvements. Work with IDOT to provide maintenance of bike and pedestrian facilities along IDOT maintained routes.	General, BD, TIF, IDOT	Public Works, Administration, City Council, Community, State/ IDOT, Railroads	

GOAL 5: Ensure funding levels remain the same while pursuing new opportunities to fund and grow the public transportation system as a whole.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
O	T.5.1	Assist the County and Central Illinois Public Transit with information and resources needed to apply for and secure grant funding.	City to continue support and assist with grant applications.	General	Public Works, Administration, City Council, County, CIPT, Community	
O	T.5.2	Work with the County and Central Illinois Public Transit to identify costs associated with expansion of E-Trax services to the south part of the City.	Identify ridership needs and trends to determine feasibility of routes.	General	Public Works, Administration, City Council, County, CIPT, Community	
L	T.5.3	Pursue planning for an overpass or underpass along the best potential route for the E-Trax system to serve the south side of the City.	Work with IDOT and Railroad on studies to determine options and evaluate considering traffic flow, traffic counts and maintaining access to adjacent businesses. IDOT 5 year plan. Hi-Low underpass on S. Banker Street maintaining 2 at grade lanes and a 2 lane underpass.	General, Grants, TIF, BD	City/Railroad/IDOT, County, CIPT	

GOAL 6: Increase ridership of all services and expand the E-Trax route service into new areas of the City and beyond.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
	T.6.1	Evaluate ridership of demand response and E-Trax services and address service needs as they arise.	Partner with County and CIPT to improve service as needed.	County, CIPT	County, CIPT, Community	
	T.6.2	Work with the County to develop a route on the south side of the City.	Identify ridership needs and trends to determine feasibility of route.	County, CIPT	County, CIPT, Community	
	T.6.3	Develop and publish marketing materials that highlight the existing transit options and provide helpful information as to how the services work.	Partner with the County and CIPT on marketing. Utilize vehicle wraps to advertise in a more aesthetically pleasing manner to raise awareness of availability.	County, CIPT	County, CIPT, Community	
	T.6.4	Continue to make enhancement of the transportation circulation system a community priority.	Work with the County and CIPT to secure available funding to enhance ridership and image of the system.	County, CIPT	County, CIPT, Community	

GOAL 7: Assist the County in the pursuit of growth opportunities that will enhance the airport while ensuring land development around the airport is effectively managed to be compatible with continued operations.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
	T.7.1	Work with the County to address future land uses and development that align with standards and height restrictions around the airport.	Identify the Airport Protection Zone to make the community and developers aware of high noise and height restrictions.	N/A	Planning, Economic Development, Administration, City Council, County, Airport Commission	
	T.7.2	Continue City involvement in the airport through staff participation in the Airport Commission.	Appoint City Staff member to attend Airport Commission Meetings to maintain strong lines of communication.	N/A	Planning, Economic Development, Administration, City Council, County, Airport Commission	
	T.7.3	Cooperate with the County on airport capital improvements through available funding and providing support for grant applications.	Continue communication with the Airport Commission on Airport improvements and capital projects.	General	Planning, Economic Development, Administration, City Council, County, Airport Commission	
	T.7.4	Conduct a benefit/cost analysis for annexation of the airport into the City.	Continue discussion on viability and having the Airport in the City Limits – Public Works, Police, Fire and EMS services. View the airport as a marketing tool to link future services to the business community.	N/A	Planning, Economic Development, Administration, City Council, County, Airport Commission	

M	T.7.5	Cooperate with the County on commercial and charter opportunities at the airport and assist the Airport to offer those services should funding be available.	Assist the Airport Commission on evaluations and studies on community needs for the commercial and charter services. View the airport as a marketing tool to link future services to the business community.	N/A	Planning, Economic Development, Administration, City Council, County, Airport Commission	
GOAL 8: Pursue capital improvements that will enhance access and safety throughout the City in relation to the railroad.						
	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	
	T.8.1	Conduct a feasibility study and pursue development of an underpass or overpass at the South Banker at-grade rail crossing to improve traffic flow.	Work with IDOT and Railroad on studies to determine options and evaluate considering traffic flow, traffic counts and maintaining access to adjacent businesses. IDOT 5 year plan. Hi-Low underpass on S. Banker Street maintaining 2 at grade lanes and a 2 lane underpass.	General, Grants, TIF, BD	City/Railroad/IDOT/USDOT/Grants	
L	T.8.2	Pursue additional rail-crossing quiet zones throughout the City to improve overall quality of life.	Acquire Grants to upgrade railroad crossings to qualify for quiet zones.	General, Grants, TIF, BD	City/Railroad/IDOT/USDOT/Grants	
M	T.8.3	Continue supporting investment in the Amtrak station and providing commuter rail access to residents and visitors. This also includes additional parking.	Acquire Grants to upgrade facility improvements to improve amenities and promote - increase ridership. Market Amtrak as a link to community events and local attractions with other communities served by Amtrak to increase ridership.	General, Grants, TIF, BD	City/Railroad/IDOT/USDOT/Grants	
M	T.8.4	Maintain positive relationships with railroad operators, including Amtrak to ensure smooth and effective project management and implementation as capital improvements move forward.	Identify local and regional railroad personnel to maintain communication on railroad and street improvement projects.	General, Railroad, Grants, TIF, BD	City/Railroad/IDOT	

SECTION 5. QUALITY OF LIFE

FUNDING & IMPLEMENTATION

GOAL 1: Protect and improve natural spaces, parks and agricultural land by incorporating sustainable practices in land development and maintenance.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
S	Q.1.1	Identify and preserve existing natural areas, such as woodlands, wetlands, and prairies, within City parks and open spaces.	Review subdivision, zoning and land use regulations to incorporate preservation areas. Implement the Urban Forestry Management Plan and Tree Preservation Ordinance.	N/A	Public Works, Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Economic Development, City Council, Community, Developers	
S	Q.1.2	Integrate native plantings and sustainable landscaping techniques in new park designs and park renovations.	Review subdivision, zoning and land use regulations to incorporate preservation areas. Implement the Urban Forestry Management Plan and Tree Preservation Ordinance.	N/A	Public Works, Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Economic Development, City Council, Community, Developers	
M	Q.1.3	Encourage eco-friendly maintenance practices, including reduced pesticide and fertilizer use, composting, and water conservation measures.	Work with IEPA and IDNR on best management practices and implementing a public education/information program	General	City/County, Community	
S	Q.1.4	Develop and promote nature-based recreation opportunities, such as walking trails, wildlife observation areas, and pollinator gardens.	Review subdivision, zoning and land use regulations to incorporate recreation opportunities and landscaping requirements. Work with TREC on expanding the trails. Implement the Urban Forestry Management Plan and Tree Preservation Ordinance.	General, Public/Private	TREC, Park District, Community, City/County	
M	Q.1.5	Partner with local schools, organizations, and agencies to offer educational programs and volunteer events focused on environmental stewardship and conservation.	As part of the Urban Forestry Management Plan and Tree Preservation Ordinance, work with schools on events such as Arbor Day. Partner with organizations such as Ballard Nature Center and the Park District.	General, Public/Private	Schools, Community, Park District, City/County	

M	Q.1.6	Encourage community participation in park clean-up days, tree planting, and habitat restoration projects.	As part of the Urban Forestry Management Plan and Tree Preservation Ordinance, work with schools on events such as Arbor Day. Partner with organizations such as Ballard Nature Center and the Park District.	General, Public/Private	Schools, Community, Park District, City/County	
S	Q.1.7	Develop and enforce zoning regulations that prioritize the conservation of agricultural lands and open spaces, directing growth towards already developed areas and preventing urban sprawl.	Review subdivision, zoning and land use regulations to incorporate preservation areas. Make appropriate revisions to the Future Land Use Maps and definitions.	N/A	Public Works, Planning, Plan Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Economic Development, City Council, Community, Developers	
	Q.1.8	Support expansion of the TREC trail where feasible.	Assist TREC to apply and secure grants for expansion. Incorporating multi-use paths on roadways were feasible. Study proposed routes.	General	TREC, Park District, Community, City/County	
L	Q.1.9	Plan and apply for funding for a pedestrian overpass on Maple Street over I-57/I-70.	Work with IDOT on options and evaluate the need. IDOT 5 year plan. City 5 year plan. Apply for grants.	General, Grants, TIF, BD	City/IDOT/USDOT/Grants	

GOAL 2: Continue to bring new cultural experiences into the community and foster growth of the local art and music scene.

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
M	Q.2.1	Establish a creative place-making initiative that ties arts and culture to economic development and neighborhood identity.	Identify neighborhoods and their unique qualities. Expand sculptures program. Look into mural opportunities within the City.	Tourism, Economic Development	Tourism, Economic Development, Public, Community Groups, Effingham Art Guild	
O	Q.2.2	Promote cultural tourism by advertising local art and music events regionally and featuring them in visitor materials.	Continue the Sculptures on the Avenues program. Continue promoting downtown events and festivals such as the Artisan Fair. Promote murals in the downtown and other areas that reflect the community. Continue to highlight events at Effingham Performance Center as well as other live music venues. Continue to support the Moccasin Creek Festival. Partner with Poss Music Works to continue developing summer concerts in the park.	Tourism. State.	Tourism. Public, Community Groups, Effingham Art Guild. Effingham Performance Center.	
O	Q.2.3	Support community arts initiatives, including public art installations and cultural events.	Pursue state and federal grants and work with community groups.	Tourism, State, Federal, Private	Tourism. Public, State, Federal, Community Groups	

M	Q.2.4	Re-purpose underutilized public spaces (e.g., parks, plazas, municipal buildings) as venues for performances, art exhibitions, and cultural gatherings.	Identify spaces. Pursue funding for improvements. Work with organizations to develop plans for multi-use venues.	Tourism, State, Federal, Private	Tourism, Public, State, Federal, Community Groups	
O	Q.2.5	Integrate arts and cultural elements into city/tourism- sponsored events to elevate local talent and foster broader community participation.	Continue the Sculptures on the Avenues program. Continue utilizing local talent for entertainment at events such as Walking through Wonderland. Work to expand a mural program throughout the downtown area.	Tourism, State, Federal, Private	Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, Public, Community Groups (Downtown Business Group)	
GOAL 3: Increase tourism in Effingham by enhancing visitor experiences, promoting local attractions, and strengthening the city's identity as a regional destination.						
	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	
	Q.3.1	Review tourism grant funding and sponsorship eligibility, requirements, and funding levels with the Tourism Advisory Board to ensure continued support of event and activity promoters.	Identify and pursue funding opportunities as they are discovered and vetted by the Tourism Advisory Board.	Tourism, State, Federal, Private	Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, Public, Community Groups (Downtown Business Group)	
O	Q.3.2	Recognize the importance of wayfinding signage and visitor amenities to improve the experience for out-of-town guests and create a more navigable and welcoming environment downtown and near major attractions.	Identify and implement additional wayfinding signage. Plan for digital kiosks with maps and other information on events and activities in areas such as downtown Effingham, EPC, Keller Convention Center and the Workman Sports Complex. Look for opportunities to expand Public Parking locations. Use technology to provide real time parking availability.	Tourism, State, Federal, Private	Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, Public, Community Groups (Downtown Business Group)	
M	Q.3.3	Expand and support signature events and festivals that draw regional attention and align with Effingham's cultural, recreational, and culinary strengths.	Continue to expand and develop Visit Effingham signature events, such as Sculptures on the Avenues, Effingham Restaurant Week and Walking through Wonderland. Continue to work with Tourism Advisory Board in supporting other local events with grant funding. Continue including these events in our annual Visitor Guide, social media, website and adding them to State's website. Continue coordinating the special event committee and assist event coordinators with applications.	Tourism, State, Federal, Private	Tourism, Chamber of Commerce, Public, Community Groups (Downtown Business Group)	

M	Q.3.4	Continue to work with the Effingham County Chamber, hotels, restaurants, bars and other businesses to provide Hospitality Training to make Effingham the friendliest and safest destination in the world.	Implement matching funds program for hospitality or recreation projects that align with tourism priorities. Partner with Chamber to host training on marketing, digital presence, customer service, etc. Partner with local artists and makers on creating an artisan trail. Invest in Shared Spaces – studios, vendor markets, etc.	Tourism. State. Private funds.	Tourism/Economic Development. Chamber. Public Groups.	
O	Q.3.5	Improve coordination with lodging providers to package experiences and offer promotions that encourage overnight stays and extended visits.	Develop themed packages based on itineraries. Encourage cross promotion among businesses (Lodging partner with restaurants, etc). Develop “concierge toolkit” for front desk with talking points, itinerary, local tips, etc.	Tourism	Tourism. Chamber. Local businesses.	
O	Q.3.6	Leverage the City’s strategic location at major highway interchanges to capture pass-through traffic with effective signage, digital engagement, and well-maintained rest stops or welcome areas.	Keep billboards up to date and in strategic locations. Make sure our wayfinding signage is up to date. Create geo-targeted digital ads for highway travelers. Install Visitor Information Kiosks. Placing additional signage at sporting event venues directing visitors to other attractions.	Tourism. State.	Tourism. Park District. IDOT.	
M	Q.3.7	Promote Effingham’s public art, cultural venues, and historic assets through walking tours, mobile apps, or printed materials to encourage deeper engagement with the city.	Continue including QR codes on sculpture tags. Re-develop sculpture tours - possibly include historic facts. Partner with ECCMA on themed itineraries, in-person tours, virtual tours, events, etc.	Tourism	Tourism. ECCMA	
M	Q.3.8	Explore the feasibility of a cultural or visitor center that can serve as a hub for tourism information, event coordination, and local arts promotion.	Conduct feasibility study. Evaluate partnership opportunities. Identify potential spots and partners for potential co-location. Develop operations and design plan.	Tourism. State.	Tourism	
O	Q.3.9	Continue to promote, assist and expand the various venues the community has to offer such as the Thelma Keller Convention Center, Effingham Event Center, Effingham Performance Center, Lake Sara, Park District and School facilities.	Partner with the Chamber and Visitor’s Bureau to continue and promotional materials.	Tourism. State. Private funds.	Tourism/Economic Development. Chamber. Public Groups.	

M	Q.3.10	Help promote youth and adult sporting and recreational events – available facilities, community athletic groups and teams (basketball, baseball, softball, soccer, swim, etc), tournaments that bring visitors (day trip or overnight).	Provide community information on lodging, dining and free-time activities – theatre, trampoline park, religious services, trails, playgrounds.	Tourism. State. Private funds.	Tourism/Economic Development. Chamber. Public Groups.	
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GOAL 4: Preserve and enhance Effingham’s historic sites and structures to strengthen community identity, support downtown vitality, and connect residents and visitors to the City’s heritage

	SECTION	OBJECTIVE	ACTION	FUNDING SOURCE	CHAMPION/DEPARTMENT	✓
M	Q.4.1	Identify and document historically significant sites, structures, and districts throughout Effingham, with particular attention to the downtown area.	Engage local volunteers/ECCMA. Work with library/ECCMA to compile central digital archive. Partner with library on history programs.	Tourism. State. Private funds.	Tourism. ECCMA. Effingham Public Library. Downtown Business Group.	
M	Q.4.2	Regularly update and maintain an inventory of historic resources, including photographs, descriptions, and historical significance.	Work with library/ECCMA to compile central digital archive. Regularly share historical attractions on social media and website.	Tourism. State. Private Funds.	Tourism. ECCMA. Effingham Public Library.	
M	Q.4.3	Promote the adaptive reuse and sensitive rehabilitation of historic buildings for new community, cultural, or commercial uses.	Offer small grants or facade improvement funds. Encourage arts and cultural uses in historic buildings	Tourism. State. Federal.	Tourism/Economic Development. ECCMA	
O	Q.4.4	Encourage the designation of eligible properties and districts for local, state, or national historic recognition.	Assist with State or National Register Nominations. Create a local preservation grant or incentive program.	Tourism. State.	Tourism Economic Development. ECCMA.	
M	Q.4.5	Explore the adoption of a local historic preservation ordinance to establish guidelines for protection and review of significant sites.	Review existing frameworks from other cities.	N/A	City of Effingham	
O	Q.4.6	Partner with local organizations, such as the Effingham Regional Historical Society, to advance research, education, and advocacy for preservation.	Support digitization of archival materials. Collaborate on educational programs, exhibits or walking tours.	Tourism. State. Private funds.	Tourism. Chamber. Effingham Public Library. ECCMA.	
S	Q.4.7	Provide educational programs and materials to increase public awareness of Effingham’s history and the value of preservation.	Develop brochures or maps featuring local historical sites. Continue including this information in our annual Visitor Guide.	Tourism	Tourism. ECCMA.	
O	Q.4.8	Seek grants, incentives, and technical assistance to support property owners in restoring and maintaining historic buildings.	Pursue partnership grants that support preservation and tourism.	Tourism. State.	Tourism/Economic Development.	

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APPENDIX

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN

N KELLER DRIVE AREA TRAFFIC STUDY

HOUSING AND ECONOMIC RECOVERY PLAN (DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PARTNERS & THE 1861 GROUP)

COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION PLAN (IL HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY)

URBAN FORESTRY MANAGEMENT PLAN

COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION ELECTRIFICATION PLAN (AMEREN ILLINOIS)

