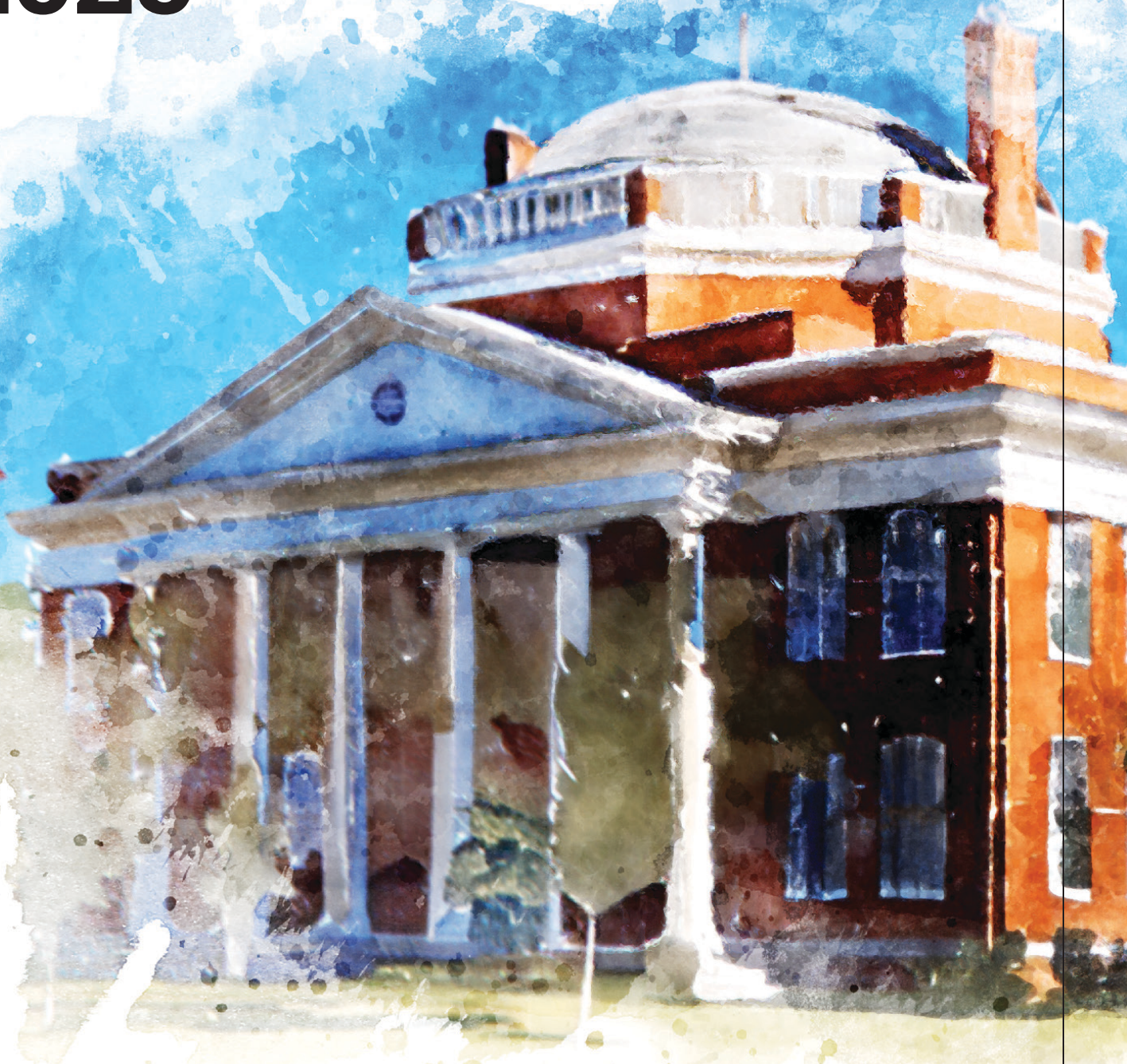


EFFINGHAM COUNTY

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2025



Strategic Objectives, Initiatives and Measures



County  
**Effingham**  
*Georgia*

# EFFINGHAM COUNTY STRATEGIC PLAN 2025

DRAFT v 10-20-2025

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With input from the Board of Commissioners, the county manager, and administration, Effingham County created draft strategic planning documents. The information presented will be used as a guide as the county develops its strategic plan to address the community's needs over the next five years. In August 2024, the Effingham County Board of Commissioners met with a focus on developing the county's vision, goals, and strategies. A second meeting was held in September 2024 with county administration, including all department directors, to focus on further developing and defining goals, measures, and strategies specific to county departments. Over the course of the meetings, Effingham County identified priorities and issues and focused their planning around four strategic goal areas:

- Communications
- Balanced Growth
- Infrastructure
- Service Delivery

Within each of the four areas are strategic objectives, action items, and measures. Additionally, as a way to measure performance, key perspectives included for each goal area included the customer, internal process, employee learning and growth, and financial.

## Vision

A prosperous county that cultivates balanced growth while preserving its culture, character, and history.

## Mission

The Mission of the Effingham County Board of Commissioners is to provide, through integrity, accountability, and transparency, exceptional public services that promote safety, health, and a high quality of life for its customers and constituents.

## Values

### **Honesty and Integrity**

*Essential for building trust and fostering strong relationships*

### **Openness and Transparency**

*Promoting trust, accountability, and communication*

### **Efficiency and Accountability**

*Ensuring goals are achieved in a timely and responsible manner*

### **Friendliness and Customer Centricity**

*Creating lasting relationships, ensuring customers feel valued*

### **Creativity and Innovation**

*Driving progress, problem solving, and the ability to generate new ideas*



## Perspectives

- Customer – focuses on the customer’s needs and satisfaction
- Internal Process – focuses on Effingham County’s internal processes, and the county’s ability to meet the needs/demands of the county
- Employee Learning and Growth – focuses on the importance of employee development, the county’s culture, and knowledge management
- Financial – focuses on the financial performance of the county

## Strategic Goal Areas

### COMMUNICATIONS

*Foster and produce accurate and effective communication between the county, its employees and the public, ensuring that they are well-informed, engaged, and empowered.*

- Strengthen internal customer engagement (employees).
- Create new communication channels for internal customers (employees).
- Strengthen external customer engagement (citizens).
- Create new communication channels for external customers (citizens).

### BALANCED GROWTH

*Cultivate balanced growth that embraces modern conveniences while preserving the county’s culture, character, and history.*

- Increase the number of people working in the county.
- Increase commercial activity.
- Improve the quality of housing developments.
- Improve the diversity of housing options.
- Ensure the sustainability and protection of our environmental resources.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

*Ensure infrastructure, maintenance, and improvements keep pace with growth.*

- Increase the capacity and reliability of water, sewer, and stormwater systems.
- Improve maintenance of roads and expand multi-use paths.
- Create and implement a five- and 10-year capital improvement plan.
- Enhance the quality of public parks and facilities.

### SERVICE DELIVERY

*Provide timely, friendly, efficient, and effective services with accountability.*

- Track and improve customer satisfaction ratings (citizens).
- Track and improve employee knowledge and skills.
- Track and improve internal customer satisfaction (employees).
- Track and improve internal efficiency and effectiveness.
- Increase and expand recreation and activity offerings.





## INTRODUCTION

Located in the southeastern part of Georgia and nestled between the Ogeechee and Savannah Rivers, Effingham County is one of the state's eight original counties. The 2020 Census reported Effingham County's total population at 73,148.

Known for its mix of rural charm and proximity to urban amenities, Effingham County maintains its hometown atmosphere residents and visitors have grown to love. The county is governed by a board of five commissioners elected from geographic districts and one chairperson elected at large. Three cities are located within Effingham County: Springfield, Rincon, and Guyton.

## STRATEGIC GOAL AREAS

Goal areas were identified through input from the Board of Commissioners. For each goal, initial items and performance measures were developed from input by the county manager and administration.

### ✓ COMMUNICATIONS

**Goal Statement:** Goal Statement: Foster and produce accurate and effective communication between the county, its employees, and the public, ensuring that they are well-informed, engaged, and empowered.

**Lead Department(s):** Communications, IT, Human Resources, Customer Support, County Manager

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>INITIATIVES</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>
<b>Strengthen internal customer engagement (employees)</b>	Improve and track employee newsletter	Number of newsletter views
	Hold regular departmental meetings	Number of departmental meetings held
	Hold quarterly department head meetings	Number of department head meetings held
	Hold regular mentoring sessions	Number of one-on-one mentoring sessions held
	Hold annual performance review meetings	Number of performance reviews completed in Paycor
<b>Create new communication channels for internal customers (employees)</b>	Implement State-of-the-County (SOC) meetings	Attendance
	Establish "Employee of the Quarter" initiative	"Employee of the Quarter" established and continues
	Produce regular employee informational videos	Number of videos produced and total views
	Launch employee communication improvement survey	Number of respondents and average scores
	Form internal stakeholder committees for communication and events	Number of stakeholder committees, frequency of meetings and attendance



<b><i>Strengthen external customer engagement (citizens)</i></b>	<i>Create additional stakeholder committees</i>	<i>Number of stakeholder committees and attendance</i>
	Increase frequency and quality of town halls/public information sessions	Number of town hall/sessions and attendance
	Increase social media engagement	Social media views, shares, conversions
	Increase website traffic and increase accessibility of key information	Website analytics (traffic, login IDs)
	Expand press mentions and media presence	Number of press mentions
	Include capital projects update to administrative staff report at Commissioner meetings	Number of administrative reports given
	Enhance frequency and quality of county-hosted events	Number of events held and attendance
	Increase county participation in non-county sponsored events	Number of non-county events attended, departmental participation and public attendance
<b><i>Create new communication channels for external customers (citizens)</i></b>	Establish "Citizen of the Quarter" initiative	Number of citizens acknowledged
	Establish "Public Service Organization of the Year" initiative	Number of organizations acknowledged
	Produce yearly State-of-the-County videos	Number of videos produced and total views
	Launch and promote Engage Effingham App	App downloads, active users, and tickets submitted
	Launch regular informational podcasts and video series	Podcast/video series subscribers and views
	Publish and maintain a county events calendar	Number of calendar subscribers and published events
	Develop digestible one-sheets simplifying county topics	Number of one-sheet views or downloads
	Create in-person citizen engagement classes	Number of engagement classes held and attendance
	Create a county history media campaign	Number of stories published



## ✓ **BALANCED GROWTH**

**Goal Statement:** Cultivate balanced growth that embraces modern conveniences while preserving the county's culture, character, and history.

**Lead Department(s):** Development Services, Recreation, County Engineering Services, Finance & Accounting Services

<b><i>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE</i></b>	<b><i>INITIATIVES</i></b>	<b><i>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</i></b>
<b><i>Increase the number of people working in the county</i></b>	Develop a means to quantify labor force	Number of Effingham residents working in Effingham County (on the map tool) Develop a survey for use through the Chamber
	Work with county IDA, city DDAs, and the school district to establish a strategic plan to increase the in-county workforce	Review traffic counts and other current, relevant data County workforce strategy developed
<b><i>Increase commercial activity</i></b>	Partner with Chamber to market county	Number of new businesses along new hub by 2030
	Identify commercial hubs	Increase in sales tax revenue
	Budget for enhanced infrastructure for potential commercial hubs	Number of and Percentage increase in the number of business permits and licenses
	Add commercial element to Comp Plan	Commercial element added
	Partner with Chamber, IDA, and DDAs to complete a commercial needs assessment	Building plan study to be completed by 2027
<b><i>Improve the quality of housing developments</i></b>	Complete ordinance revisions by the 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2025, and review annually	Ordinance revisions completed
	Constantly review the development of finished projects to determine code adjustments as necessary	Number of text amendments
	Annually review development best practices utilized by outside jurisdictions	Reports on best practices produced
<b><i>Improve the diversity of housing options</i></b>	Create formula to determine workforce housing stock	Track the workforce housing stock results
	Engage subject matter experts; hold roundtable discussions; look for mutually agreeable ways to provide quality, affordable housing	Number of annually approved ADUs, single-family detached, multi-family attached, and mobile homes; List of recommendations for workforce housing design standards

<b>Ensure the sustainability and protection of our environmental resources</b>	Hold retreat with BOC to establish guidelines for initiative for protection and preservation of environmental resources	Guidelines established
	Amend Stormwater Management LDM to incentivize enhanced green stormwater practices	Stormwater Management LDM amended
	Become a certified Water First community	Water First community certification achieved
	Obtain Class 5 FEMA community ratings status for Floodplain Management	Class 5 FEMA community ratings status for Floodplain Management obtained

## ✓ INFRASTRUCTURE

**Goal Statement:** Ensure infrastructure, maintenance, and improvements keep pace with growth.

**Lead Department(s):** Parks and Landscapes, Facilities and Fleet Service, County Engineering Services, Development Services

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>INITIATIVES</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>
<b>Increase the capacity and reliability of water, sewer, and stormwater systems</b>	Develop an annual report on the implementation status of the Water, Sewer, and Stormwater Master Plans, and include recommended amendments	Annual report on the implementation status of the Water, Sewer, and Stormwater Master Plans developed
	Develop an annual report on the implementation status of the Water and Sewer Rate Study and include recommended amendments	Annual report on the implementation status of the Water and Sewer rate study developed
	Establish an annual water and sewer condition and perf. assessment report	Annual water and sewer condition and perf. assessment report established
	Create sustainable funding source to maintain and improve stormwater system	Sustainable funding source created
	Develop a model that tracks development velocity, committed capacity, and system capacity to project demand and need for future expansion	Capacity model developed
	Develop a robust in-house asset management system for water, sewer, and stormwater	Implementation plan created and benchmarks established
	Expand customer base for water and sewer	Number of new customers per year (increase by 15% per year)



<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>INITIATIVES</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>
<b>Improve maintenance of roads and expand multi-use paths</b>	Develop an annual report on the implementation status of the Transportation Master Plans and include recommended amendments	Annual report on the implementation status of the Transportation Master Plans developed
	Establish an annual road condition assessment report	Annual road condition assessment report established and measures defined
	Establish an annual transportation system performance report	Annual transportation system performance report established and measures defined
	Develop a robust in-house asset management system for roads and transportation infrastructure	Asset management system implemented and measures defined
	Establish an annual bike and pedestrian assessment & utilization report	Measure number of miles of paths per 1,000 of population
<b>Create and implement a five- and 10-year Capital Improvement Plan</b>	Assign oversight of five- and 10-year capital plan to key employee	Oversight of five- and 10-year capital plan assigned to key employee
	Source and implement a software system to create and maintain a five- and 10-year Capital Improvement Plan	Capital Improvement Plan software system sourced and implemented
	Prioritize a list of capital projects in each asset category	List of capital projects in each asset category prioritized Number of projects and status
	Create a master list of all capital project revenue sources and revenue restrictions	Master list of source, amount, and restrictions created
<b>Enhance the quality of public parks and facilities</b>	Develop an annual report on the implementation status of Parks and Facilities Master Plans and include recommended amendments	Annual report developed
	Establish an annual Parks and Facilities performance and condition assessment report	Annual report established
	Develop a robust in-house asset management system for Parks and Facilities	In-house asset management system developed





## ✓ SERVICE DELIVERY

**Goal Statement:** Provide timely, friendly, efficient, and effective services with accountability.

**Lead Department(s):** All Departments

<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE</b>	<b>INITIATIVES</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE MEASURES</b>
<b>Track and improve customer satisfaction ratings (citizens)</b>	Create and distribute "General" and "Departmental" customer satisfaction surveys and establish baselines	Customer satisfaction surveys created Customer satisfaction scores for surveys
	Track tickets on Engage Effingham App and customer service calls	Number of tickets, response times, close-out times, and phone metrics
	Create a method for customers to recognize individual employees and to address complaints	Number of compliments vs. complaints
<b>Track and improve employee knowledge and skills</b>	Department heads to develop department-specific training for each position	Number of continuing professional education hours completed per employee
	HR to develop a core training program for new employees	Percentage of new employees completing training within six months of hire
<b>Track and improve internal customer satisfaction (employees)</b>	Create Employee Satisfaction Survey and establish baseline	Customer satisfaction scores for surveys
	Establish a system for employee recognition, i.e., awards for excellence	Number of service recognition awards given
	Develop "Employee of the Quarter" program	Number of "Employee of the Quarter" acknowledged
	Implement team-building events	Number of team-building events held and attendance
<b>Track and improve internal efficiency and effectiveness</b>	Develop SOPs for key positions and key business processes	Number of written standard operating procedures for positions
	Review and document departmental workflow	Percentage of Departments documenting workflows
	Develop an internal system to gather staff input/feedback on workflow	Internal system developed Number of staff submitting input
	Identify areas for modernization improvements to minimize duplication of effort and paper-based documentation	Percentage of Departments submitting reports of improvement recommendations
	Leverage software packages to automate service delivery	Number of software packages recommended to IT Department for review



	Create dashboards to monitor progress and efficiency	Number of dashboard panels tracked by IT Department Determine service delivery cost per citizen compared to similar sized and surrounding governments
<b><i>Increase and expand recreation and activity offerings</i></b>	Develop an annual report on the implementation status of Recreation Services Master Plan	Annual report developed
	Establish an annual parks condition & utilization report	Annual report established and measures defined
	Quarterly reports on recreation program participation	Number of participants per sport, per age group

## CONCLUSION

This strategic plan outlines priorities for the next five years, built on a strong foundation of community input, fiscal responsibility, and deep respect for Effingham County's unique history and character.

Throughout the strategic planning process, input was gathered from residents, county staff, and elected leaders about what matters most. The feedback directly shaped the strategic priorities and initiatives outlined in the plan, ensuring it reflects the values and vision of the people served. Strategic priorities include:

- Communications – building clearer, more consistent channels of communications with both residents and employees
- Balanced Growth – growing responsibly, while maintaining the county's rich history, character, and natural beauty
- Infrastructure – improving roads and infrastructure to support safe and sustainable growth
- Service delivery – providing responsive, high-quality services for all residents

These efforts reflect the long-term master plans and reinforce the commitment to preserving what makes the county a safe, family-oriented community with excellent schools, low crime, and a strong sense of place. As Effingham County moves forward, growth with intention is key.

