



MULTIMODAL MOBILITY FRAMEWORK PLAN



PREPARED BY FORESITE GROUP, INC. ON BEHALF OF EFFINGHAM COUNTY, GA

Introduction

Effingham County is the 31st fastest-growing county in the nation, and its population is projected to increase by about 20,000 in the next ten (10) years. Community planning is a dynamic process where planning activities may have some relationship to one another. This framework plan brings together the interrelated yet separate plans to establish a more complete multimodal network county-wide.

To effectively guide generations of change, the County has established this framework plan to be flexible yet maintain a structural framework for implementation. The identified framework elements are critical components of an integrated Vision for mobility and complete streets in Effingham County. The framework plan reflects the desired vision of a vibrant, mobility-oriented, and connected county. This framework plan codifies concepts but allows for flexibility and adaptability, which keeps the plan dynamic and facilitates adjustment to changing conditions.

This Framework Plan is a decision-making tool to enable the county to incorporate multimodal and community-based infrastructure into the local and intraregional network of transportation opportunities.

The goals of this plan are to:

Draw a picture of Existing and Proposed Walking and Biking Conditions

Understand Challenges and Opportunities through Community Outreach

Propose an Improved Network

Develop and Prioritize Policy, Program, and Infrastructure Recommendations

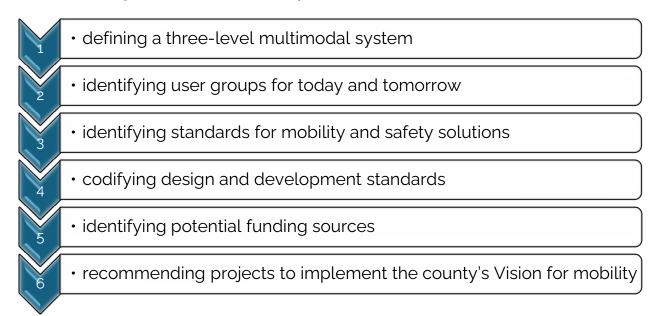
Develop Design Guidelines

Developing this plan: This action plan was developed through an inventory of existing and proposed conditions for bicycling and walking as gathered from a review of existing planning documents, data analysis, fieldwork, and an extensive public engagement process.



Framework Elements

The Active Effingham Multimodal Mobility Framework Plan framework elements consist of:



Three-Level System

Inter-Regional

An interregional system is a network of pathways that connects multiple regions, spanning counties, states, or even different geographical areas. These trails are designed to facilitate long-distance travel for recreational enthusiasts such as hikers, cyclists, and equestrians, promoting outdoor activities and tourism while offering access to diverse landscapes.

Typically, an interregional trail system includes various types of trails that may range from paved paths suitable for biking to rugged hiking routes that navigate through forests, natural reserves, and more rural areas. These systems often link to existing local trails and parks, creating an extensive network that allows users to experience the natural beauty and cultural landmarks of different regions.

Interregional trail systems can also serve important community functions, such as providing safe routes for transportation

between towns, enhancing local economies through tourism, and promoting healthy lifestyles among residents. They may host events or programs to encourage usage and foster connections among communities, making them vital corridors for recreation and regional identity. Overall, these systems enhance accessibility and enjoyment of outdoor environments while encouraging stewardship and conservation efforts among users.

This portion of the Effingham County Interregional trail system has been contemplated through the community planning processes conducted by other groups, such as the PATH Foundation, for the **Georgia Hi-Lo Trail**, **Guyton**, **Treutlen Trail**.



3-Level System Focus



Georgia Hi-Lo Trail Plan was developed by the PATH Foundation and outlines a vision for a dynamic and interconnected trail system that spans from the northern regions of Georgia to the southern areas, effectively linking urban and rural communities through the interregional system.

Implementing the Georgia Hi-Lo Trail plan is proposed as a phased approach, identifying short-term and long-term projects. The plan reports that funding strategies, partnerships with local governments. potential organizations, and grant opportunities will be crucial for realizing the project's goals.

The proposed alignment for the trail would follow north south along the abandoned Central of Georgia Railroad right of way. Today, the alignment is primarily owned by the Southern Company – the corporate parent of Georgia Power – which uses the right of way for local power transmission. The City of Guyton has used the portion of the old railroad alignment that it owns to build a recreational trail through the center of town and past Guyton Elementary School, extending nearly 0.75 miles from Gracen Road south to 3rd Avenue.

The Georgia Hi-Lo Trail Plan recommends "model projects" that were developed in



collaboration with key county stakeholders and the Georgia Hi-Lo Trail Initiative for each of the counties through which it passes. The model project for Effingham is 10.2 miles long and connects the City of Guyton and the future Atlas Reservoir Park. The model trail is proposed to be developed in two (2) phases. Phase 1 of the proposed paved, multi-use trail is 2.8 miles and would provide connections to and between Johnson County Park, the Railroad Depot and downtown Wrightsville, and Johnson Middle/High School and Elementary School.

Phase 2 of Effingham County's Georgia Hi-Lo Trail model project is 7.4 miles continuing south on the Georgia Power transmission alignment. This long phase makes crossings of two (2) types of roadways – low-traffic-volume, short connector streets, and higher-traffic-volume longer roads. The higher-volume roads warrant user-activated pedestrian traffic signals, but the lower-volume streets do not require this additional infrastructure investment. The recommended trail alignment connects suburban development with several key recreational and natural areas as well as to the Effingham County Sand Hill Sports Complex and Elementary School, and the county's planned Atlas Park. Parcels for the alignment and connections have not yet been purchased, but the plan identified several opportunities for locating the trail infrastructure if funding and agreements can be reached in future phases.

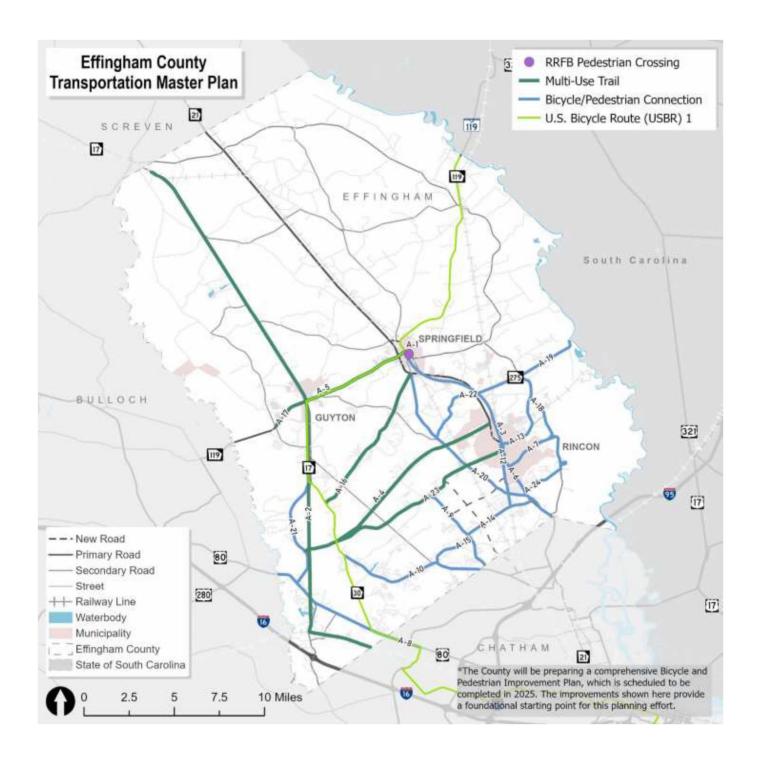
Intra-County

An intracounty / cross-county trail is a pathway that traverses multiple areas within a single county, designed for various activities such as walking, biking, hiking, or horseback riding. These trails often connect parks, natural reserves, and urban areas, providing a way for residents and visitors to explore the county's diverse landscapes, enjoy recreational activities, and promote a healthier lifestyle.

Typically, an intracounty trail could feature scenic views, opportunities for wildlife observation, and access to local landmarks or historical sites. For example, a trail might wind through forests, alongside rivers, or through small towns, allowing users to experience the natural beauty and cultural richness of the area. They often have designated rest areas, informational signs, and sometimes even educational sections to learn about the local ecology and history.

Many counties invest in maintaining and promoting these trails as part of their efforts to enhance community well-being, encourage outdoor activity, and foster tourism. Whether it's for a leisurely stroll, an invigorating bike ride, or a family outing, an intra or cross county trail serves as an essential link within the community and a gateway to the outdoors.

This component of the network has been considered/contemplated in the update **Effingham County Transportation Master Plan**. Within this plan, *Figure 8. Bike and Pedestrian Recommended Projects*, the stakeholders and community came to a consensus on an intracounty (within the county) network corresponding with existing infrastructure and with proposed improvements including safety, multi-use trails, bike/ped trail connections, and US Bicycle Route 1.



Local multimodal connections, Safe Routes to School, Intown Gaps

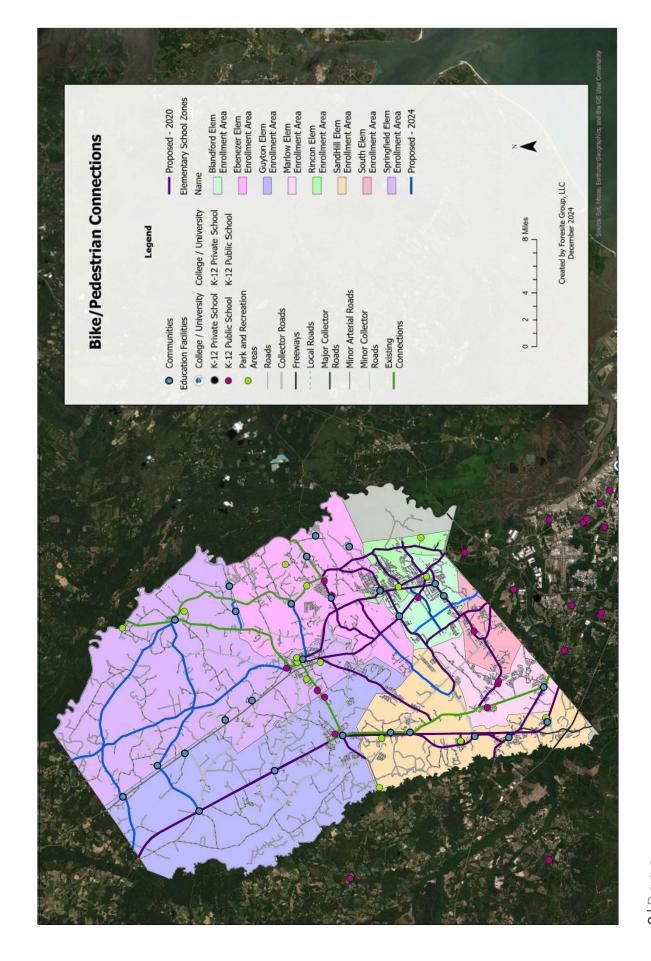
A local walking trail and bicycle system enhances the community's connectivity while promoting a healthy lifestyle for residents. By separating the conflicting modes of travel, the County expects to achieve zero roadway fatalities and serious injuries and improve the health and well-being of County users by 2030.

Establishing a well-connect local network provides multiple benefits to residents:

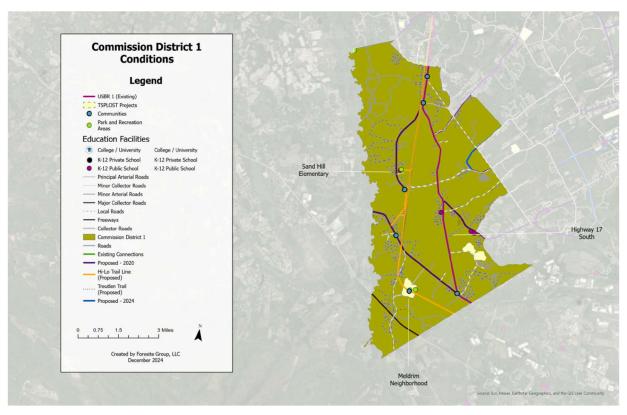
- 1. Promotes Physical Health: The trail encourages daily physical activity, helping residents maintain fitness without the need for a gym membership.
- 2. Environmental Impact: By providing a sustainable transportation option, the bicycle system reduces reliance on cars, decreasing traffic congestion and lowering carbon emissions.
- 3. Enhanced Quality of Life: Access to green spaces and recreational opportunities contributes to mental well-being, providing a peaceful environment for outdoor activities.
- 4. Economic Boost: The improved infrastructure can attract local businesses and tourism, benefiting the community economically and enhancing local property values.
- 5. Improved Connectivity: The walking trail and bicycle paths link various neighborhoods to essential services, making commuting easier and promoting a more active lifestyle.

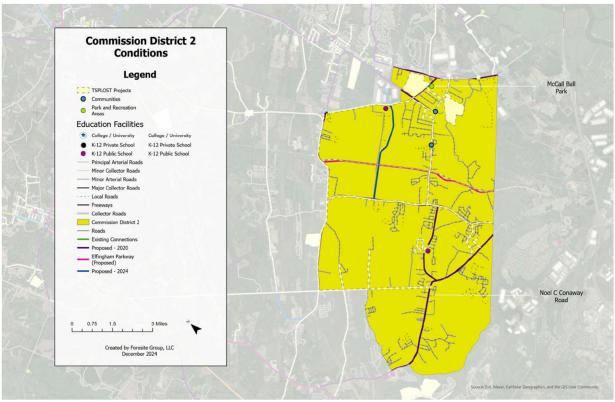
Overall, the integration of a walking trail and bicycle system offers numerous advantages that enrich the lives of residents and foster a vibrant, active community.

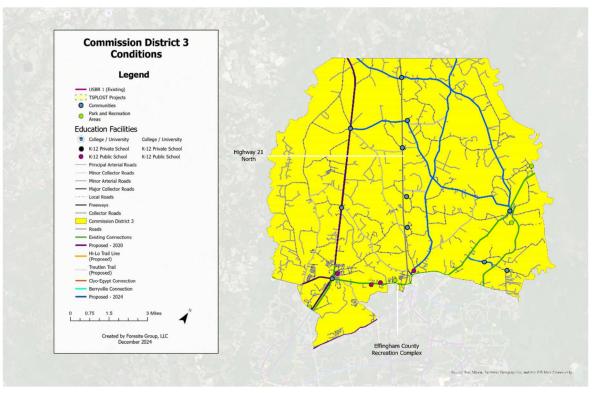
The county's current network of facilities and those currently proposed in other plans is depicted below in relation to school enrollment areas. **The intent is to highlight the walkshed of the county's most vulnerable residents.**

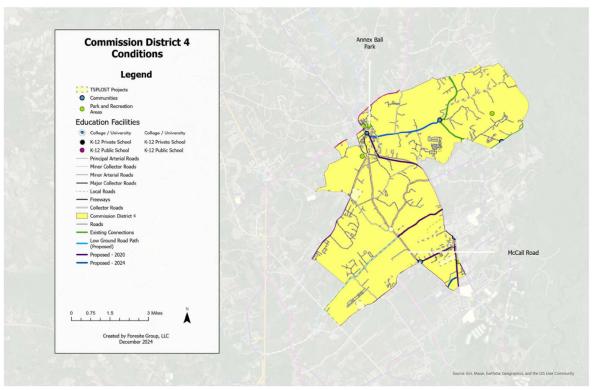


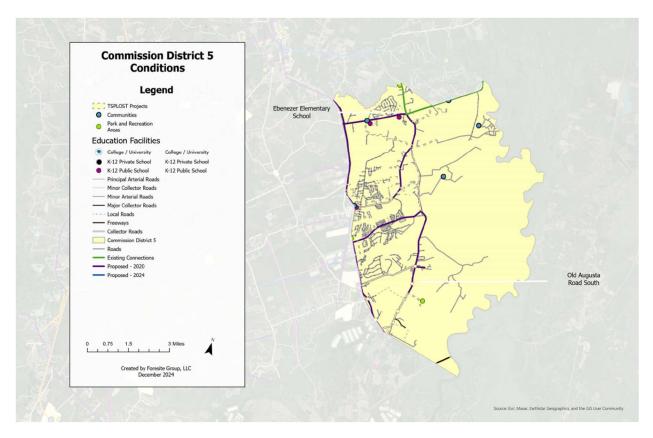
When considering the local network, the following maps show proposed and planned projects separated by county commission district.



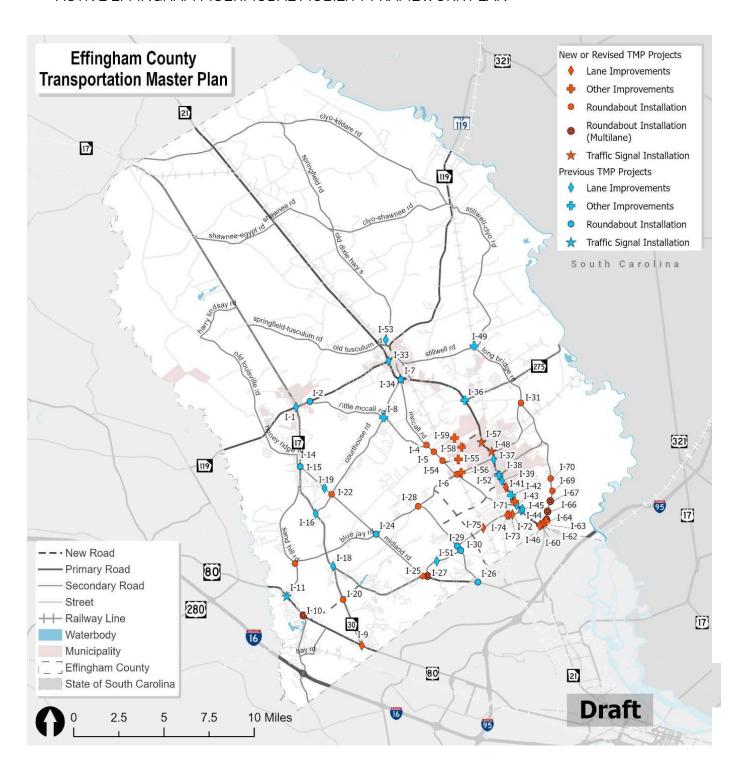




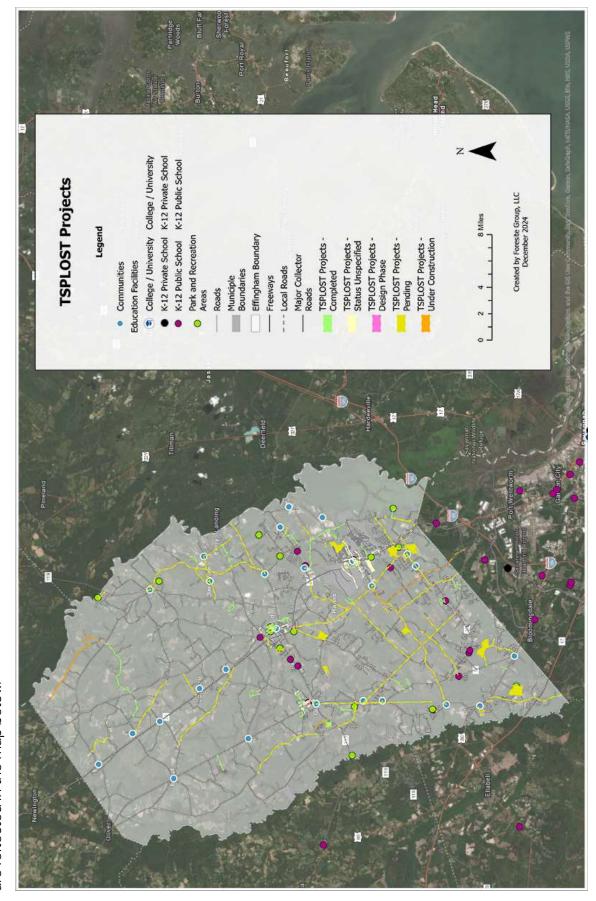




Intracounty roadway, intersection, and bike/pedestrian improvements have been studied and recommended in the updated **2024 Effingham County Transportation Master Plan**. New or revised TMP Projects are shown in *Figure 2. Congestion-Focused Intersection Improvements* from the 2024 TMP.



Further, the county's Transportation Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (TSPLOST) projects and their current phase and status are reflected in the map below.



Key projects under Effingham County TSPLOST include:

- 1. SR 30 @ Kolic Helmy Road
- 2. Effingham Parkway from SR 30 to Blue Jay Road
- 3. SR 26/US 80 @ CR 311/Sandhill Road Roundabout
- 4. Courthouse & Midland Intersection
- 5. Old River Rd & Hwy 80
- 6. Blue Jay Turn Lanes
- 7. Goshen Rd Widening
- 8. Hodgeville @ Kolic Helmey Roundabout
- 9. Hodgeville @ Goshen Roundabout
- 10. Hodgeville @ Blue Jay Turn Lanes
- 11. Midland Rd @ Hwy 30
- 12. McCall Rd @ Little McCall Turn Lanes
- 13. Courthouse Rd @ McCall Realignment
- 14. Blue Jay Road
- 15. Old River Road
- 16. Midland Road
- 17. SR 30/SR 17 Intersection
- 18. Sand Hill/Wesley Drive Intersection

- 19. McCall Road
- 20. Blue Jay Road/McCall Road Intersection
- 21. Hodgeville Road/Gateway Parkway Intersection
- 22. Stillwell-Clyo Road
- 23. Courthouse Rd/Little McCall Road
- 24. Courthouse Road
- 25. Little McCall/McCall/Rahn Station Intersection
- 26. SR21/McCall (Springfield)
- 27. Old Augusta Road/General Way
- 28. Old Augusta Road/Logistics Parkway
- 29. Old Augusta Road/Logistics Parkway
- 30. Old Augusta Road/Chimney Road
- 31. SR 21/Goshen Road Extension
- 32. SR 21/Commerce Drive
- 33. Old Augusta Road
- 34. SR 17/Midland Road
- 35. Magnolia Steet Extension North
- 36. Lowground Road
- 37. Madison Lane Improvements
- 38. Railroad Lane Improvements

Existing Conditions: Walking and Biking

Effingham Today:

Effingham County, Georgia, is the sixth fastest growing county in Georgia which has begun to put substantial strain on the county roads. This growth has increased congestion on county roads and created safety issues. As will be shown below, there is demand and opportunity for residents to have alternative means of travel for shorter commutes to home, school, and recreation opportunities among others.

In the early 21st century, Effingham County has had unprecedented demand for industrial locations. Interest in industrial development has been spurred by the area's high population growth, tremendous growth at the Georgia ports and the ever-growing economy of coastal Georgia. Contributors include the military, aerospace industry and a diversified manufacturing base. The Savannah area is home to Gulfstream Aerospace and Hunter Army Airfield.

The Effingham County Industrial Park has announced several new tenants since 2005. In 2007 it became the site of EFACEC Group, a Portuguese-based transformer manufacturer for their North and Central America operations. The U.S. factory is located in Rincon, Georgia and produces both core and shell technology power transformers. Other businesses include the

Flint River Services refrigerated storage, ValuePart distribution center, as well as expansions of several existing industries in the park. The site is ideally located on a four-lane divided highway only 10 miles (16 km) from Interstate 95 and within 15 miles (24 km) of the Georgia Ports, the Savannah International Airport and the historic City of Savannah.

The Effingham Industrial Development Authority acquired approximately 4,000 acres (16 km2) for development. The acquisitions include a tract of approximately 200 acres (0.81 km2) adjacent to Interstate 16 and an additional 1,550-acre (6.3 km2) tract on Interstate 16 seven miles from Interstate 95. Both tracts are within 15 miles (24 km) of the Georgia Ports Authority, and within 10 miles (16 km) of the Chatham County Mega-Siteh (formerly known as the DaimlerChrysler site) at the strategic intersection of Interstates 95 and 16.

A potential of 10,000,000 square feet (930,000 m2) of light manufacturing and/or Distribution Center/ Warehousing space exists at this site. Another recent acquisition is the former Research Forest Tract. Approximately 2,300 acres (9.3 km2) in size, this will be a "legacy" development to include commercial, executive office, heavy industrial, light industrial, professional service, research and recreational land uses. The site comprises three separate tracts of land six rail miles from the Georgia Ports Authority, with planned access to the Savannah River Parkway, Norfolk Southern mainline rail and CSX mainline rail. The property is being master planned. The development is planned to attract research and development, assembly operations, headquarters and other low-impact operations.

Transportation Users

This plan was developed by blending data-driven tools with public and stakeholder input. This framework plan intends to design for "All Ages & Abilities" as defined by the National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO).

The NACTO defines designing a multimodal system for the "All Ages & Abilities" user. These users are less adept at riding and traveling via non-motorized travel means.

As the Urban Bikeway Design Guide notes: Many existing bicycle facility designs exclude most people who might otherwise ride, traditionally favoring very confident riders, who tend to be adult men. When selecting a bikeway design strategy, identify potential design users in keeping with both network goals and the potential to broaden the bicycling user base of a specific street.

Population by age groups

Population 65 years and over: 12.63% (8,183)

Population under 18: 17,474 (27.0%)

Population in working-age group (18-64): 39,112 (60.4%)

Population 65 and over: 8,183 (12.6%)

Total population here: 64,769

Population that is in households: 64,441 (99.5%)

Total housing units here: 24,317

Population by race/ethnicity here:

Hispanic or Latino: 3,492 (5.4%)

White alone, not Hispanic or Latino: 48,204 (74.4%)

Black or African American alone, not Hispanic or Latino: 8,747 (13.5%)

American Indian / Alaska Native alone, not Hispanic or Latino: 181 (0.3%)

Asian alone, not Hispanic or Latino: 677 (1.0%)

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone, not Hispanic or Latino: 28 (0.0%)

Some Other Race, not Hispanic or Latino: 269 (0.4%)

Two or More Races, not Hispanic or Latino: 3,171 (4.9%)

Population by urban/rural status here:

Urban: 16,703 (25.8%)

Rural: 48,066 (74.2%)

These users and their unique constraints are defined as1:

- School-age Children: School-age children are an essential cycling demographic but face unique risks because they are smaller and thus less visible from the driver's seat than adults, and often have less ability to detect risks or negotiate conflicts.
- **Seniors:** People aged 65 and over are the fastest growing population group in the US, and the only group with a growing number of car-free households. Seniors can make more trips and have increased mobility if safe riding networks are available. Bikeways need to serve people with lower visual acuity and slower riding speeds.
- **Women:** Women are consistently under-represented as a share of total bicyclists, but the share of women riding increases in correlation to better riding facilities. Concerns about personal safety including and beyond traffic stress are often relevant. Safety in numbers has additional significance for female bicyclists.
- **People of Color:** While Black and Latinx bicyclists make up a rapidly growing segment of the riding population, a recent study found that <u>fewer than 20% of adult Black and Latinx bicyclists and non-bicyclists feel comfortable in conventional bicycle lanes; fear of exposure to theft or assault or being a target for enforcement were cited as barriers to bicycling. Longstanding dis-investment in street infrastructure means that <u>these riders are disproportionately more likely to be killed by a car than their white counterparts.</u></u>
- People with Disabilities: People with disabilities may use adaptive bicycles including tricycles and recumbent handcycles, which often operate at lower speeds, are lower to the ground, or have a wider envelope than other bicycles. High-comfort bicycling conditions provide mobility, health, and independence, often with a higher standard for bike infrastructure needed.
- Low-Income Riders: Low-income bicyclists make up half of all Census-reported commuter bicyclists, relying extensively on bicycles for basic transportation needs like getting to work. In addition, basic infrastructure is often deficient in low-income neighborhoods, exacerbating safety concerns. An All Ages & Abilities bikeway is often needed to bring safe conditions to the major streets these bicyclists already use on a daily basis.
- **People Riding Bikeshare**: Bike share systems have greatly expanded the number and diversity of urban bicycle trips, with <u>over 28 million US trips in 2016</u>. Riders often use bike share to link to other transit or make spontaneous or one-way trips, placing a premium on comfortable and easily understandable bike infrastructure. Bike share users range widely in stress tolerance, but overwhelmingly prefer to ride in high-quality bikeways. All Ages & Abilities networks are essential to bike share system viability.

¹ National Association of City Transportation Officials. Urban Bikeway Design Guide. https://nacto.org/publication/urban-bikeway-design-guide/designing-ages-abilities-new/ages-abilities-user/

- People Moving Goods or Cargo: Bicycles and tricycles outfitted to carry multiple passengers or cargo, or bicycles pulling trailers, increase the types of trips that can be made by bike, and are not well accommodated by bicycle facilities designed to minimal standards.
- **Confident Cyclists**: The small percentage of the bicycling population who are very experienced and comfortable riding in mixed motor vehicle traffic conditions are also accommodated by, and often prefer, All Ages & Abilities facilities, though they may still choose to ride in mixed traffic.

A snapshot of existing Walking and Biking conditions data related to transportation equity and socio-demographics was gathered utilizing the **US Department of Transportation (USDOT) Equitable Transportation Community (ETC) Explorer**, - an online tool developed by the U.S. Department of Transportation "to promote equity in transportation planning and decision-making". This interactive platform enables users to visualize and analyze data related to transportation equity across various communities.

The ETC reports approximately 62,200 people living within the county and approximately 13,800 county residents living within "disadvantaged" census tracts. The ETC explores five (5) main societal indicators of disadvantage and provides "Overall Disadvantage Component Scores – Percentile Ranked" which creates an index of those indicators to develop an overall picture of equity and security in the community.²:

- 1. Transportation Insecurity
- 2. Social Vulnerability
- 3. Climate & Disaster Risk
- 4. Environmental Burden
- 5. Health Vulnerability

Active Effingham considers making significant improvements within each of these areas by implementing short and long-term strategies but will focus on Transportation Insecurity as its main metric.

Transportation Insecurity occurs when people are unable to get to where they need to go to meet the needs of their daily life regularly, reliably, and safely. As noted by the USDOT ETC, "A growing body of research indicates that transportation insecurity is a significant factor in persistent poverty." This indicator is comprised of three (3) subfactors:

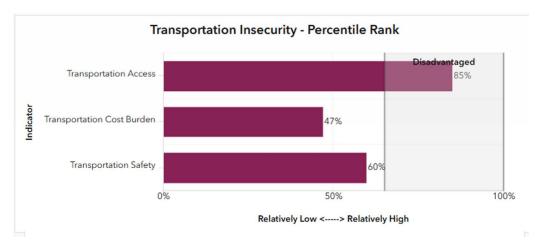
- **Transportation Access-** Communities with higher scores may experience longer commute times and difficulty traveling where they want to go via cars, walking, and transit. Long commute times and limited access to personal vehicles or transit can create significant barriers to employment and resources.
- Transportation Cost Burden- Communities with higher scores spend a great percentage of household income on transportation, including transit costs; vehicle maintenance and

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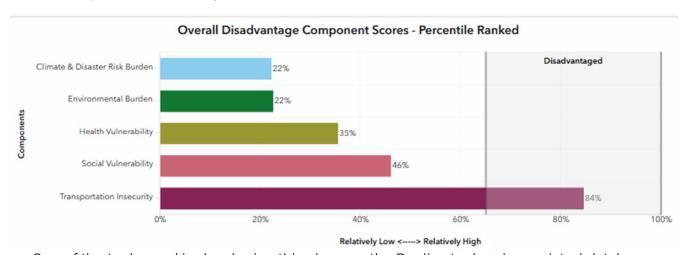
² https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/0920984aa80a4362b8778d779b090723/page/Understanding-the-Data/

insurance costs; gasoline and fuel, which leaves less money for housing, medical care and food potentially leading to households living in substandard housing with higher rates of chronic illness and obesity.

• **Transportation Safety-** *Communities with higher scores experience higher levels of fatalities per 100,000 persons related to motor vehicle crashes.*

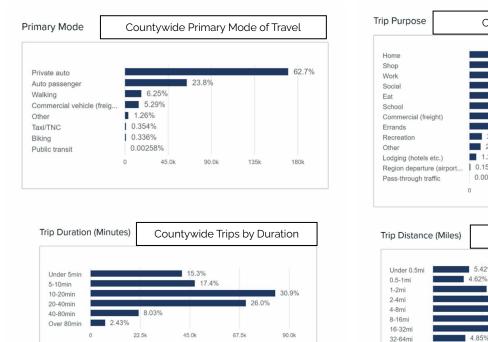


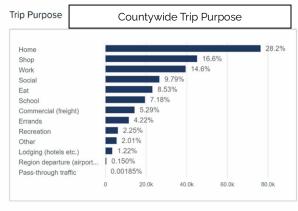
What is seen is that Effingham County as a whole is in the 85th percentile for **Transportation Access**, the 60th percentile for **Transportation Safety**, and the 47th percentile for **Transportation Cost Burden**. Each of these indicators is within the "Relatively High" and "High" burden areas. The county's overall **Transportation Insecurity Index** is "Relatively High", at 84% for Transportation Insecurity.

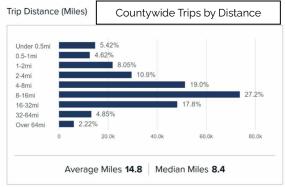


One of the tools used in developing this plan was the Replica tool and associated databases to gather insight into travel patterns within and through the county. Travel patterns were analyzed taking place on an average weekday (Thursday) in Spring 2024. Replica estimates that during that period, approximately 271,000 trips were taken by 101,000 trip-takers. The average trips per square mile were estimated at 389.

A summary of the **primary mode of transportation countywide** shows that the majority of travel is done by private auto or auto passengers. The primary purpose of all trips was to travel home (28.2%), and the secondary trip purpose was for shopping trips (16.6%).





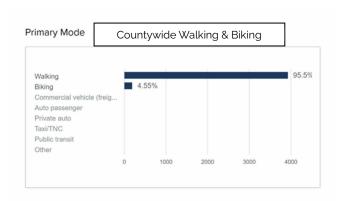


Those trips peak at 7-8 AM and 3-4 PM with nearly equal volumes (25,000 trips). Examining the duration of the trips, 32.7% of trips are less than 10 minutes, while longer trips average 10-20 minutes 31.1% of the time, and 20-40-minute trips average 25% of the total trips. The volume of shorter trips shows demand for other modes of travel more amenable to shorter trips.

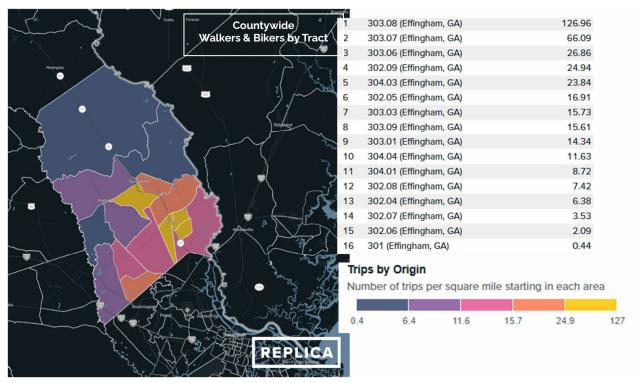
Looking in more detail at the nature of walking and biking trips, we can see which areas of the county are experiencing the most trips, for what purpose, and for what duration.

Average Minutes 21.8 | Median Minutes 15

On an average weekday, approximately 3,930 walking trips (95.5%) and 187 biking trips (4.55%) were taken within the county per square mile.

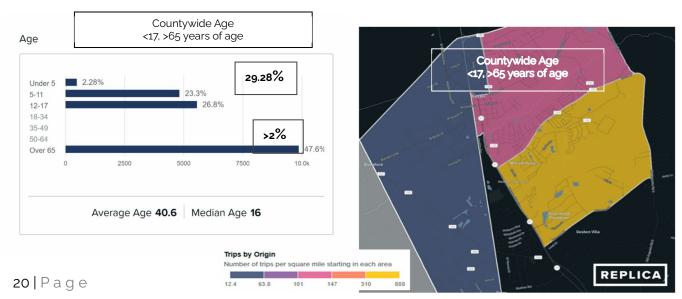


If we look at the concentration of those trips by census tract, as depicted below, we can see concentrations of existing local trips, how they align with existing and planned infrastructure; and where there are potential gaps in the multimodal network.



Looking at the county as a whole, the concentrations of populations of residents that would most utilize and benefit from walking and biking investments - those under driving age and over the age of 65, we can see those tracts as 303.06. 303.07. 303.08. We can see that 73.18% (cumulatively) of the county is within this category, and concentrations of those individuals are concentrated in the tracts as depicted below.

The current highest volume of walking and biking trips per square mile is centered around where there is existing infrastructure in Rincon. Of those trip-takers, 29.28% are under the age of 17 and less than 2% are over the age of 65.

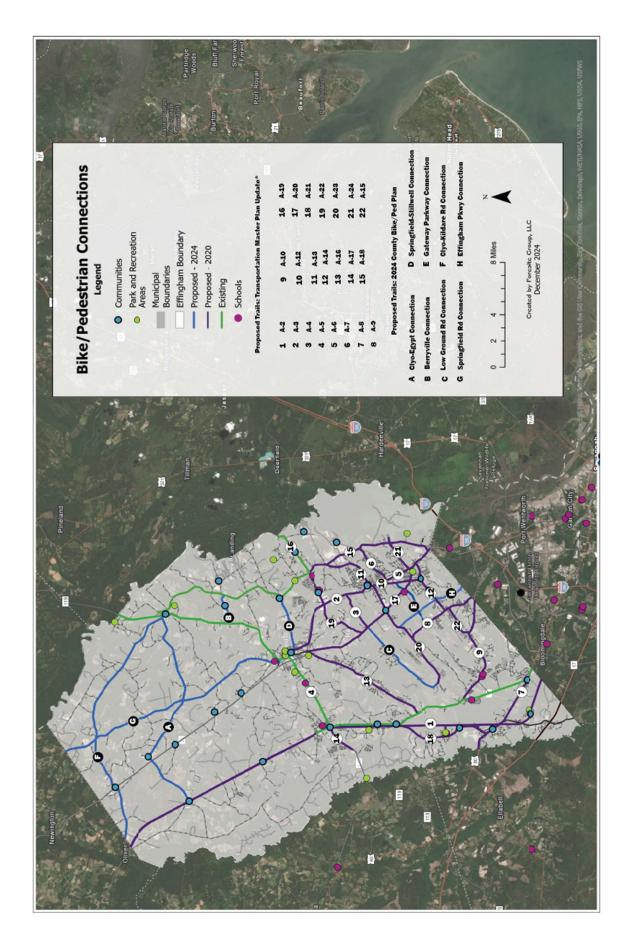


EXISTING AND PROPOSED NETWORK

As noted, this framework plan combines multiple planning studies and programmed projects and enables the County to implement projects to connect these systems. The following table and map reflect existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian projects proposed through other plans, as well as projects identified through the framework plan development public and stakeholder engagement process.

Project ID	Road/Project Path	Extents (w/i County)	Project Type			
Existing						
USBR 1/Coastal	US Bike Route 1	South Carolina Border to US Hwy 80 via Hwy 119 and Hwy 17	Route Demarcated by Signage			
Local Bike Route	Local Bike Route	Reedsville Road to South Caroline Boundary via Ebenezer, Long Bridge, and Stillwell Clyo Road	Route Demarcated by Signage			
Trans Georgia	Trans Georgia	Bryan County Boundary to Chatham County Boundary via US Hwy 80	Route Demarcated by Signage			
Guyton Main Street Rail Trail	Guyton Main Street Rail Trail	Simmons Street to Third Avenue via Central Boulevard	Route Demarcated by Signage			
Savannah River Run	Savannah River Run	Screven County Line to USBR 1 via Highway 21	Route Demarcated by Signage			
	2020 Transp	portation Master Plan Update				
A-2	Hi-Lo Trail	Screven County Line to Chatham County Line	Multi-Use Trail			
A-3	Rincon-Springfield Bicycle/Pedestrian Connection	SR-119 to 4th St/Rincon-Stillwell Road	Bicycle Lanes, Sidewalks			
A-4	Low Ground Road Bike/Ped Connection	Blue Jay Road to McCall Road	Multi-Use Trail			
A-5	SR 119 Multi-Use Path	SR-17 to N Laurel Street	Multi-Use Trail			
A-6	SR-21	4th St/Rincon-Stillwell Road to Chatham County Line	Bicycle Lanes, Sidewalks			
A-7	Fort Howard Road	SR-21 to Old Augusta Road	Bicycle Lanes			
A-8	US-80	Bulloch County Line to Chatham County Line	Separated Bike Lane, Sidewalks			
A-9	Hodgeville Road	Blue Jay Road to Chatham County Line	Wide Shoulder, Sidewalks			
A-10	SR 30/Noel C Conaway Road	SR-17 to Chatham County Line	Bicycle Lanes, Sidewalks			
A-11	Meldrim-Chatham Trail	Central Avenue to Chatham County Line	Multi-Use Trail			
A-12	N. Carolina Ave	SR-21 to Goshen Road	Wide Shoulder, Sidewalks			
A-13	4th Street/Rincon-Stillwell Road	SR-21 to Old Augusta Road	Bicycle Lanes, Sidewalks			

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DECISION MAKING & PROJECT PRIORITIZATION

Decision-making in multimodal transport systems implementation involves **selecting the most optimal combination of different transportation modes to create a Complete Street for All** considering factors like cost, time, reliability, environmental impact, and accessibility, often using complex data analysis and multi-criteria decision-making approaches to find the best route and mode combination for each specific situation. Project prioritization for modal projects may also be influenced by the potential funding program criteria.

The U.S. Department of Transportation states that "every transportation agency ... has the responsibility to improve conditions and opportunities for walking and bicycling" and recognizes complete streets as a context-sensitive approach to building an accessible transportation system for all.1 USDOT defines Complete Streets as "... streets designed and operated to enable safe use and support mobility for all users. Those include people of all ages and abilities, regardless of whether they are traveling as drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, or public transportation riders. The concept of Complete Streets encompasses many approaches to planning, designing, and operating roadways and rights of way with all users in mind to make the transportation network safer and more efficient."

Goal Area	Criteria	
Enhance Safety	Crash Reduction Potential	
	Pavement Condition Improvement	
Preserve Infrastructure	Bridge Risk Reduction Score	
	Other Asset Improvement	
Outline in a Machilline	Population Accessibility	
Optimize Mobility	Travel Time Reliability	
	Business Accessibility	
Transform Economies	Economic Development Potential	
	Reduce Environmental Risk	
	GHG Emission Reductions	
Foster Sustainability	Environmental Enhancements	
	Resilience	
	Reduce Future Maintenance	
	Project Connectivity	
Connect Communities	Multimodal Access	
Connect Communities	Access to Community Destinations	
	Equity	
safety and creating a		

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Complete Streets policy is to "routinely incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit accommodations into transportation infrastructure projects as a means for improving mobility, access, and safety for the traveling public."

this framework for implementing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, the previous planning studies, including this one, have prioritized project recommendations based on more complete system. Safety

is the top criterion for project recommendation on the county's High Injury Network (HIN). The

³ https://www.dot.nv.gov/projects-programs/programs-studies/one-nevada-transportation-plan/implementing-transportation-projects

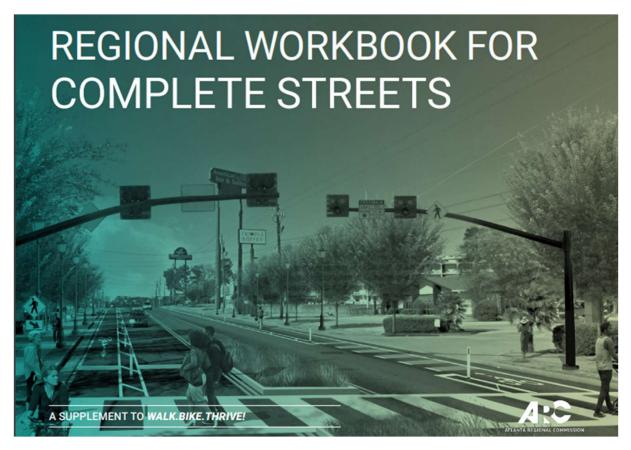
County may consider the following project criteria in project prioritization that also aligns with the county's vision statement and goal areas.

To further support the County in its prioritization process, the table below shows **GDOT's Complete Streets Policy** for evaluating the appropriateness of pedestrian facilities that could be used by the county to prioritize multimodal projects.

Table 3-1. GDOT Complete Streets Policy: Pedestrian Warrants Policy Check

		Questions	Y/N
area?	located in an urban	If located in an urban area, is the project a planning study, reconstruction, new construction, capacity-adding, or resurfacing project which include curb and gutter as part of an urban border area? (Refer to Section 6.7 of the GDOT <u>Design Policy Manual</u> for more information on urban border areas).	
	located in a rural	If located in a rural area, are there existing or planned pedestrian travel generators and destinations along the segment of roadway under evaluation? (Generators and destinations can include but are not limited to residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, schools, public park, transit stops and stations, and convenient stores).	
		If located in a rural area, is there evidence of pedestrian traffic (e.g., a worn path along roadside) at any point along the segments of roadway under evaluation?	
		If located in a rural area, have there been pedestrian crashes equal to or exceeding the rate of 10 crashes per ½ mile segment of roadway over the most recent five years for which crash data is available?	
		If located in a rural, has a local or regional adopted planning study identified the need for pedestrian accommodations for any point along the segment of roadway under evaluation?	
Guidelines	convenience store, p	llege, university, major institution, shopping center, eark, or another major pedestrian generator along or within e segment of roadway under evaluation?	
	Is there a shared use evaluation?	e path or transit stop along the segment of roadway under	
	Is there an approved development that may generate pedestrian traffic in the future within close proximity to the segment of roadway under evaluation?		
	Is the project in an urbanized area or an area projected to be urbanized by an MPO, regional commission, or local government prior to the design year of the project?		
	Have one or more pedestrian fatalities occurred along the segment of roadway under evaluation?		
	Has a vehicle-pedestrian crash occurred in the past five years along the segment of roadway under evaluation?		
	Do any city, county, MPO, or regional commission plans (comprehensive transportation plans, livable community, community development plans, etc.) identify the need for pedestrian accommodations along the segment of roadway under evaluation?		
	Has reasonable com received in the past	munity interest related to pedestrian infrastructure been two to four years?	

Another resource for developing project prioritization for each unique case is the Regional Workbook for Complete Streets developed by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)⁴ in 2019. This workbook was developed with Georgia's design criteria in mind. Effingham County can utilize these resources in its multimodal project prioritization process.



⁴ https://cdn.atlantaregional.org/wp-content/uploads/arc-complete-streets-workbook-webview.pdf

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Study the potential development of a shared-use path along Low Ground Road and its local connections.
- 2. Examine potential bike /ped path from Little McCall to Courthouse to Baker Pond and an overpass bridge for kids to get to school to cross Hwy 21 and pedestrians to cross to get to the other side of McCall to get to Laurel St. and get to Food Lion Shopping Center.
- 3. Continue implementing the Georgia Hi-Lo, Treutlen, and Guyton Extension projects.
- 4. Develop a grant funding implementation strategy for improvements
- 5. Require sidewalks for all new developments, including commercial and subdivisions, with connection to the nearest bike path/sidewalk system.
- 6. Update county zoning code to include new design standards for pedestrian, bicycle, and multimodal facilities for all users.
- 7. Develop county project decision-making process for implementing multimodal facilities.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Implementing bicycle and pedestrian improvements requires creative funding. The Georgia Hi-Lo Trail Plan recommends a multiyear grant funding strategy to construct the Effingham model project for the Georgia Hi-Lo trail as well as some potential sources that can be considered for the many other improvement projects to be undertaken to create a more complete network:

LOCAL FUNDING SOURCES

Some examples of local funding include:

- City/County budget allocations for parks, transportation, or sewer and water
- Bond referenda
- Sales surtax funds
- Hotel-Motel taxes
- Development impact fees
- In-kind products and services
- Philanthropic grants
- Transportation Special Purpose Local Options Sales Tax (TSPLOST)

STATE OF GEORGIA FUNDING SOURCES

Some examples of state funding include:

- Special project allocation
- Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Program (GOSP)
- DNR Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
- Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

DONATIONS

Foundations and generous individuals are often supportive of trail infrastructure especially if the benefits to the community are clearly spelled out. Additionally, fundraisers engaging smaller donors can yield substantial money to invest in design and engineering and eventually construction.

FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES

- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) prioritizes and distributes federal transportation funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Discretionary Grant Program
- Federal Transit Administration Capital Funds (FTA)
- Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)
- Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)
- National Highway Performance Program (NHPP)
- Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (ORLPP)
- Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG)
- Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (formerly Transportation Alternatives Program) (TA)
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Safe Routes to School
- Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A)

COMMUNITY OUTREACH, ENGAGEMENT, AND FEEDBACK

Summary of public workshops, surveys, and stakeholder meetings

Community & Stakeholder Engagement was conducted throughout the study and plan development. Collective decision-making and consensus-building are key to developing an equitable mobility plan. Creating stakeholder teams in community decision-making offers numerous valuable benefits that enhance the planning process and outcome effectiveness. By bringing together diverse representatives from various sectors such as local government, law enforcement, health services, non-profit organizations, and community groups, stakeholder teams facilitate collaboration and ensure that multiple perspectives are considered. This inclusivity leads to more comprehensive solutions that address the needs of different community segments.

One key value of stakeholder teams is fostering a sense of shared responsibility and ownership among participants. By involving community members and representatives in the decision-making process, stakeholders feel empowered, which can lead to increased buy-in and support for initiatives. When individuals see their voices reflected in the planning, they are more likely to engage actively in the implementation phase and help sustain the efforts over time.

Moreover, stakeholder teams enhance transparency and trust within the community. Regular meetings and open dialogue allow stakeholders to communicate the rationale behind decisions and gather feedback, which can mitigate misunderstandings and foster a collaborative atmosphere. This transparency builds trust between the community and decision-makers, making it easier to navigate challenges together.

Additionally, diverse stakeholder teams can leverage a wider array of resources and expertise. Each stakeholder brings unique knowledge, skills, and networks to the table, enabling the group to identify innovative solutions and potential funding opportunities. This collaborative approach can also help anticipate challenges that may arise during implementation, leading to more robust planning.

Lastly, stakeholder teams can serve as a vital connection between the community and policymakers. By engaging directly with community members, these teams can articulate the community's needs and priorities, ensuring that policies and programs are grounded in real-world experiences. This connection is essential for developing initiatives that are both relevant and effective in promoting community well-being.

Creating stakeholder teams in community decision-making nurtures collaboration, empowers residents, fosters trust, and ensures that diverse perspectives are integrated into planning processes. This ultimately leads to more effective, inclusive, and sustainable outcomes for the whole community.

Engagement was sought through in-person, public meetings, social media engagement, and online surveys to control barriers such as time, resources, experience, and political access. Engagement in developing this plan was solicited without discrimination based on race, gender, age, disability, or any other characteristic and to ensure equal opportunity and access for all participants, The county's commitment to inclusivity and fairness guided the entire process.

The following meetings were held after notification was provided on the county's social media and direct invitation.

Meeting	Date	Location
Stakeholder Project Kick-Off Meeting	August 26, 2024	Effingham County Chambers
Stakeholder Meeting #1	September 17, 2024	Effingham County Chambers
Stakeholder Meeting #2	November 6, 2024	Effingham County Chambers
Public Meeting #1	November 6, 2024	Clarence B. Morgan Complex
Stakeholder Meeting #3	December 11, 2024	Effingham County Chambers
Public Meeting #2	December 11, 2024	Clarence B. Morgan Complex

Stakeholder Team

A Stakeholder team of county officials and project partners was convened to represent the county departments involved in implementing safety and mobility initiatives within the county. Public meetings were held at regular milestones.

The Stakeholder team was comprised of representatives from:

City of Guyton Management and Police	Effingham County Sheriff's Office
City of Springfield Management and Finance	Effingham Health System
Effingham Chamber	Effingham County School District
Effingham County Development Services	Georgia Bikes Association
Effingham County E-911 Records and Training	Georgia Department of Transportation
Effingham County Emergency Operations and Maintenance	Georgia Hi-Lo Trail
Effingham County Fire Department	NAACP
Effingham County Parks & Landscape Director	

Community Engagement:

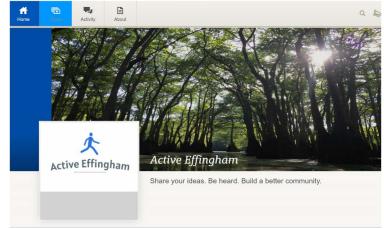
In addition to in-person meetings, community input was also sought through an online survey tool to allow respondents to provide input on a unifying Vision for the Active Effingham bicycle and pedestrian action plan and potential strategies to meet that Vision.

The Mindmixer platform was used to conduct this survey. Two rounds of surveys were conducted:

- 1. September 23, 2024 November 4, 2024
- 2. November 13, 2024 December 13, 2024

The survey was responded to by residents from the major municipalities in Effingham County including Rincon, Guyton, Bloomingdale, and Springfield.

The first round of the survey had 18 responses, the second had 35 responses.



Each round allowed stakeholders and the public to provide feedback on a shared Vision for what the community desires to achieve through this active mobility plan, potential strategies, and desired network



criterion. Respondents were asked questions with multiple choice answers and provided the opportunity to enter more details into the survey for additional comments and details.

Newspaper Statement

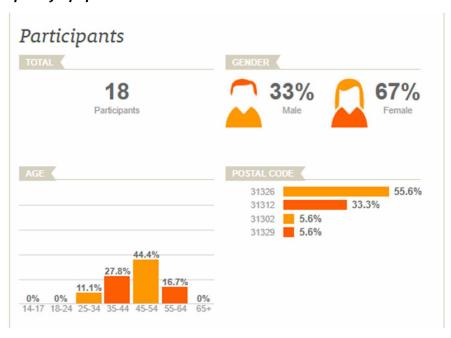
"Active Effingham is a county-wide transportation study examining the possibilities of implementing bicycle, pedestrian, and multimodal improvements to connect the residents of Effingham County and its municipalities with safe travel alternatives. This study is paid for by a grant through the Federal Highways Administration's Safe Streets for All program. The result of this study will enable the county to potentially procure more federal funding for bike/ped infrastructure. If residents are unable to attend the public meeting being held this evening, November 6th, from 5-7 pm, they will be able to provide input on proposed policies and projects through an online survey that will be available November 13th to December 10th. There will be another public meeting in early December which is yet to be scheduled." Doug Stoner, Foresite Group, consultant to Effingham County.

SURVEY ROUND 1 RESULTS

Respondents were asked to vote on a unifying Vision statement for Active Effingham as well as strategies to achieve that vision. The Vision statement for Active Effingham is:

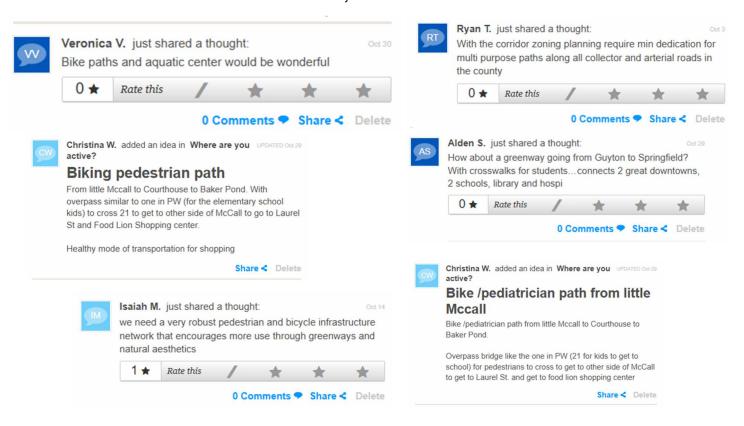
"Foster the development of a safe interconnected network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, which promotes a healthy alternative means of transportation and recreation by connecting communities and increasing future transportation mobility to enhance Effingham County's overall quality of life."

The demographics of survey participants were collected by the MindMixer tool used to proctor the survey. Those respondents were identified as such:



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The survey provided multiple-choice questions as well as the opportunity to fill in additional details. Comments received in the survey round #1:



Multiple Choice question responses are summarized below. These questions were developed with the intent of gauging the public's overall support for the strategies the County could utilize in the implementation of bicycle, pedestrian, mobility, and multimodal projects.

Those questions and responses are summarized below:

Question 1: What is your primary reason for biking and walking? The top result was Exercising/Recreation. Other options received no votes, which were: commuting to work, commuting to school, shopping, accessing government services, I do not walk or ride a bike.

Question 2: How frequently do you walk for exercise, recreation, or transportation purposes? Respondents stated that they do so a few times a week.

Question 3: What makes it difficult to bike or walk in Effingham County? The top response was the Lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, roadway shoulders. And baking facilities. The 2nd highest-rated response was Heavy Traffic, followed by Speeding.

Question 4: Which of the following multimodal facilities would you feel most comfortable using? Paved greenway – also known as multi-use paths received the highest response with the 2nd highest response was Side Path (Shared-use path along a roadway).

Question 5: Which of the following crossing improvements would you feel most comfortable using? The top voted response was: Hi-visibility crosswalks - marked with diagonal or longitudinal lines parallel to traffic flow

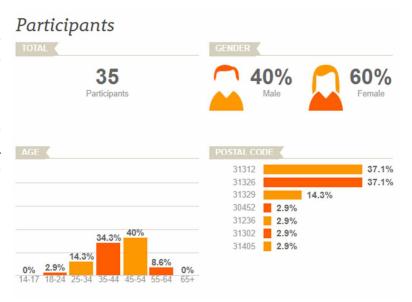
Question 6: Which of the following would be most helpful for Effingham County? Respondents voted for Public space and amenities (e.g. seating and gathering areas), followed by Signage, wayfinding, and lighting.

Question 7: What matters the most to you? Please select one option from below. The respondents were offered 5 options: Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects (e.g. sidewalks, crosswalks, greenways, etc.); Vehicle, bicycles, and pedestrian education and enforcement; roadway safety improvements; connectivity of community resources; policy/zoning. The top response was: Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects (e.g. sidewalks.

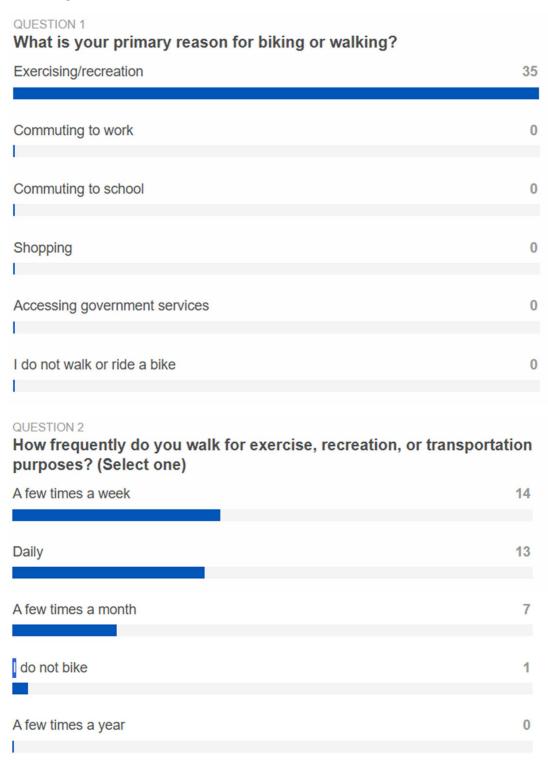
SURVEY ROUND 2 RESULTS

This round of the survey received more responses with 35 total. Those respondents during this round of the survey were identified as such:

The survey provided multiple-choice questions as well as the opportunity to fill in additional details. Comments received in the survey round #2:



The questions and results from the survey are reflected below with the fill-in comments following:



QUESTION 3 What makes it difficult to bike or walk in Effingham County? Lack of sidewalks, crosswalks, roadway shoulders, and biking facilities 33 Heavy traffic 22 Speeding 13 Poor lighting 11 I don't feel safe 7 QUESTION 4 Which of the following multimodal facilities would you feel most comfortable using? Paved Greenway - also known as multi-use paths 16 Side path (Shared-use path along a roadway) 7 Natural surface trail - an unpaved/unimproved off-road facility 5 5 Sidewalks - typically along a roadway Bike lanes - • On-road facility for bicyclists designated by striping, signage, and/or pavement markings

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Which of the following crossing improvements would you fee comfortable using?	7111030
Hi-visibility crosswalks - marked with diagonal or longitudinal lines parallel t traffic flow	to 12
Pedestrian- activated mid-block crossings - warning beacon activated by a pedestrian or bicyclist at an uncontrolled or unsignalized crossing location	11
Refuge islands - median with a refuge area that is intended to help protect pedestrians or bicyclists who are crossing a multi-lane road	6
Creative crosswalks - created using colorful art and paint on top of paveme	ent 5
	0.00
Mid-block crossings - marked crosswalk that occurs in a location other than intersection	1
	1
intersection QUESTION 6	1
intersection QUESTION 6 Which of the following would be most helpful for Effingham Public space and amenities (e.g., seating and gathering areas)	County?
Intersection QUESTION 6 Which of the following would be most helpful for Effingham Public space and amenities (e.g., seating and gathering areas) Signage, wayfinding, and lighting	County?
intersection QUESTION 6 Which of the following would be most helpful for Effingham	1 County?

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What matters the most to you? Please select one option from below. Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects (e.g., sidewalks, crosswalks, greenways, etc.) 28 Policy/zoning 4 Roadway safety improvements 2 Connectivity of community resources 1 Vehicle, bicycle, and pedestrian education and enforcement 0

QUESTION 8 Select Objectives that Support this Goal: 1. 'Provide a system of safe, convenient, and accessible bike/pedestrian facilities working through governmental agencies, the private sector, and the public.' Provide a connected system to destination points 18 Provide ancillary facilities to enhance bike and pedestrian systems. Open Ended Question (Click to View Responses) 4 Coordinate facilities with road improvements and right-of-way corridors to 3 minimize public costs. Ensure safety and needs for all user types by ways of educational programs, tracking bike and pedestrian accidents and developing a bicycle suitability 2 analysis Provide connections to other modes of transportation 2 Support bike and pedestrian training and safety programs. Develop and require bike and pedestrian systems to meet ADA and typical design standards adopted by Effingham County. Implement a maintenance program. 0 As part of new developments and commercial and industrial project design and approval...they can contribute to paying for this.. Additional Responses Get me some bike lanes to Hilton Head Beaches. Require sidewalks for all new developments, including commercial and subdivisions, with connection to the nearest bike path/sidewalk system. The survey is only allowing one choice for several questions

QUESTION 9 Select Objectives that Support this Goal: '2. Amend the development process guidelines to encourage and promote the proliferation of bike/pedestrian facilities.' Include bike/pedestrian planning considerations in all transportation improvements. 13 Require sidewalks along identified high-priority pedestrian corridors adjacent to proposed developments. 9 Coordinate bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts with countywide recreational and health planning considerations. 8 Encourage developers to build sidewalks within subdivisions. 3 Require proposed developments to provide connectivity to adjacent land uses within 1/4 of a mile. 1 Establish and encourage the construction of typical design standards and include them in the Effingham Development Code. Open Ended Question (Click to View Responses) 0 Encourage pedestrian connections between compatible land uses through shortterm transportation projects. 0

QUESTION 10

You can help define the Vision for the Active Effingham Safe Streets for All Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan! Select the top 3 VALUES that match your VISION for you Effingham County community.

Promotes healthy alternative means of transportation and recreation.	12
Provides an alternative transportation network that improves the quality of life in and connected to the county	8
Provides for safe mobility.	7
Provides interconnected network.	7
Increases mobility alternatives to single occupancy vehicle ownership and use.	1
Open Ended Question (Click to View Responses)	0
Connects/reconnects communities within and outside of the county.	0

Additional Responses

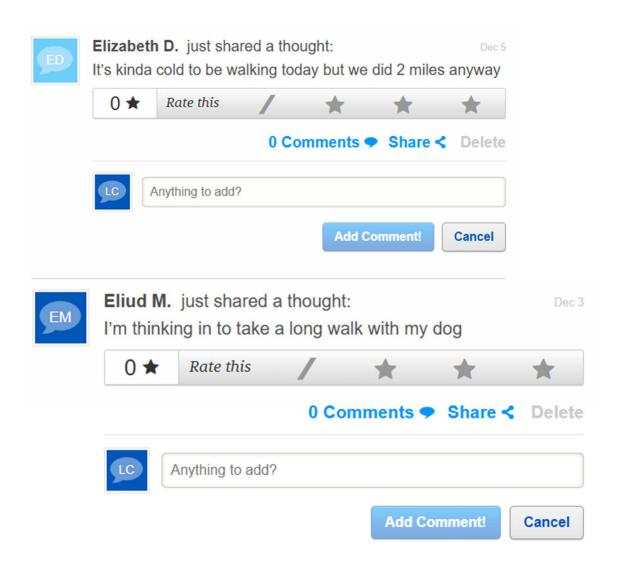
QUESTION 11

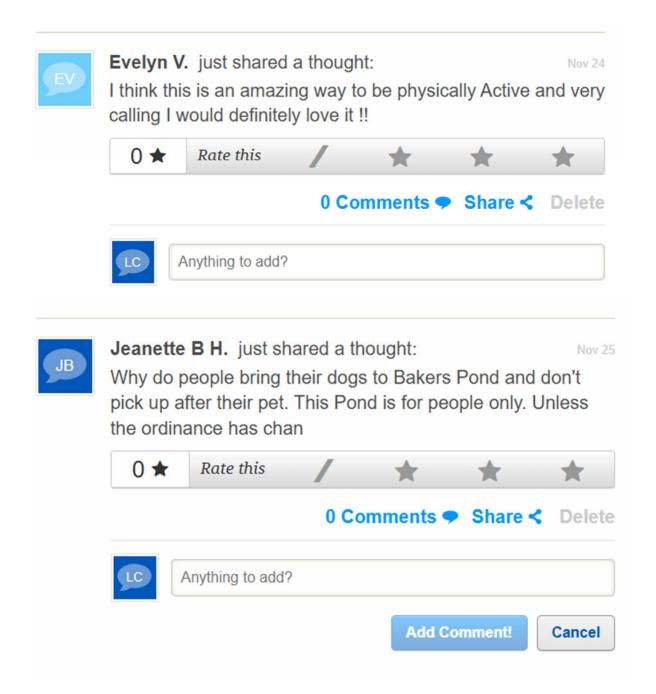
What community destinations are critical to connect by multimodal trails?

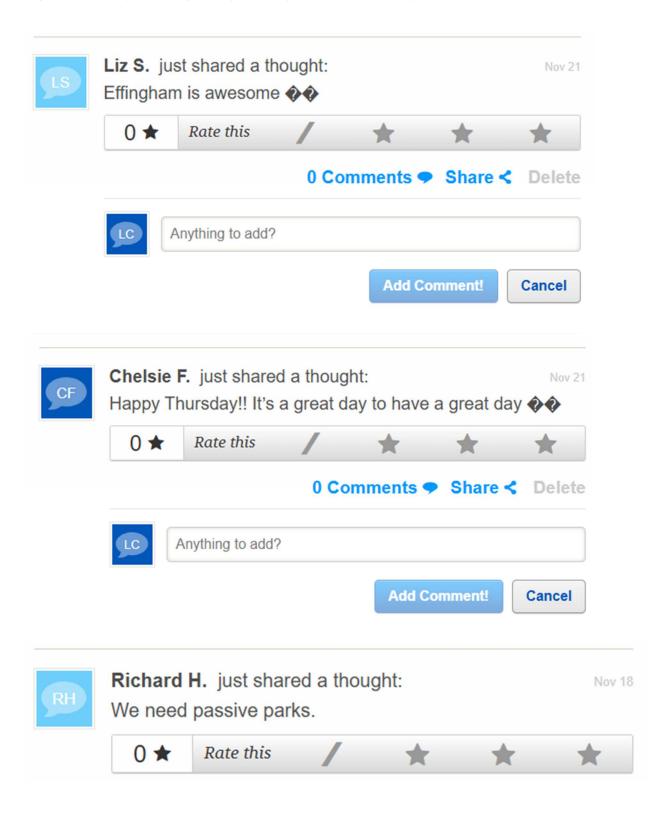
Open Ended Question (Click to View Responses)

17 Responses

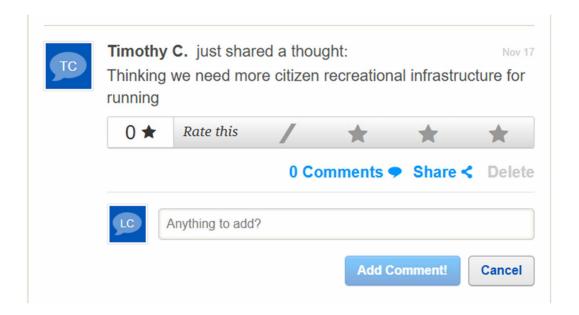
trails?			
Parks (2)		Additional Respor	 ises
Parks, subdivisions, so	hools, and municipalities	, tadisional topol	
Schools and libraries			
crosswalks churches,	ng neighborhoods commerci ect. There are no sidewalks an oose to exercise or walk animal	d residents have to	
Shadowbrook			
South Effingham area	needs a park. Odd hwy 30 or M	lidland or near Rd	
Springfield to guyton			
There are very few com	munity destinations		
A place for families to s	pend time together, exercise a	nd play.	
Along highway 30			
boat landings for parkin	ng, schools, restaurants and sh	opping	
Cities, parks, ect			
City of Rincon and outly	ying communities		
Downtown Guyton, Dow proposed Atlas Project.	wntown Springfield, Pineora Ba	ll Park, Sandhill, and	
Effingham expressway, Blue jay, Goshen.	Hodgeville, Midland, HWY 17,	HWY 80, Old Augusta,	
I think just finding a way schools, parks and crea	y to connect our high density a		

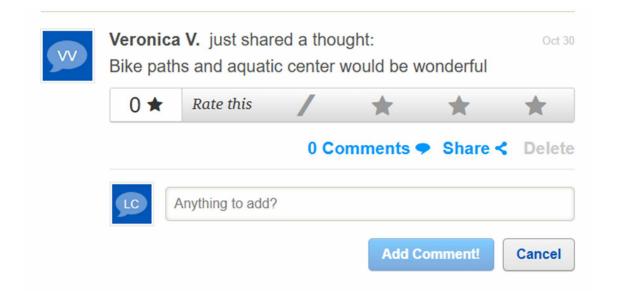






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Alden S. just shared a thought:

Oct 2

How about a greenway going from Guyton to Springfield? With crosswalks for students...connects 2 great downtowns, 2 schools, library and hospi

