

### **Springfields Vision Statement:**

“Springfield is a city that values its strong roots in tradition, character and heritage while also looking toward the future. Known as the “Heart of Effingham County,” Springfield desires to balance its quiet residential nature, rural hometown appeal, connection with natural resources, and high quality of life while promoting economic development with balanced growth.”

### **Springfield Comprehensive Plan Goals:**

These community Goals and Policies reflect ways that Springfield can seek to find balance and cohesion between the existing, historic aspects of the city and the new growth and development that will continue to come to Springfield. Based on the vision the City has for its future, the following have been selected as areas of focus and designated as goals that will help to achieve that vision.

Each section includes a brief description of what has changed from the last Comprehensive Plan Update in adopted in 2020. These new updated goals are more descriptive and reflective of what Springfield’s long range focus should be to attain the City’s vision for the future.

### **Transportation**

*Goals have the same focus of promoting connectivity, walkability, alternative transportation, Ebenezer Creek access and proactive traffic planning. Most have only been modified to more specific and attainable.*

- Continue to expand multi-use trails, walkable streets, and connectivity between new communities, commercial developments and recreation areas.
- Promote the increased use of golf carts and other alternative modes of transportation.
- Promote and expand Ebenezer Creek Biking and Walking Trails.
- Support Highway 119 Georgia Bike Route.
- Implement measures identified in master plan for traffic lights, sidewalks and general connectivity.
- Promote ways to provide connections to the Springfield Ebenezer Greenway.

### **Land Use**

*Continued focus on limiting sprawl, land preservation, Ebenezer Creek protection, and Hwy 21 Corridor management are maintained. New goals to address city growth via annexation, and development locations have been added.*

- Direct growth to areas where adequate infrastructure exists that can accommodate the need.
- Support development of property near existing, similar development.
- Support infill of empty lots with similar and comparable uses.

- Require land to be preserved for passive recreation or improved as active recreation space when new development and residential subdivisions occur.
- Continue to enforce commercial corridor gateway beautification on Hwy 21 Bypass.
- Expanded zoning standards that support integration of mixed uses in areas where density is appropriate.
- Support annexation of lands along Hwy 21 Bypass to Ebenezer Road to ensure cohesive development standards.
- Support beautification and preservation efforts along Ebenezer Greenway.

## **Housing**

*Goals are still to promote affordability and variety in housing stock. Previous goals have become more specific to what is attainable in Springfield and new goals regarding interconnectivity, and housing locations based on density have been added.*

- Support opportunities for affordable housing and promotion of home ownership.
- Support opportunities for higher density developments near commercial corridors, such as Hwy 21 Bypass south of Laurel Street.
- Support development that offers a variety of housing options.
- Support development of higher end housing with larger than minimum lots sizes, especially in areas near wetlands to minimize potential environmental disturbances.
- Look for opportunities to promote townhomes and mixed use development between commercial and residential areas.
- Promote and incentivize roadway, sidewalk, and multiuse trail connections between uses.

## **Economic Prosperity**

*Goals continue to focus on promoting the revitalization of and promotion of downtown, historic preservation, and connectivity. Goals regarding lodging and community events have been modified.*

- Continue to encourage and support social events, art, music, theater, festivals and other live entertainment to make downtown a destination.
- Encourage a variety of event types and event locations for our residents and visitors.
- Promote a variety of lodging opportunities within the city that will not result in a loss of community character, or become a detriment to the historic downtown, established residential area, environment, or gateway corridors into the city.
- Balance the preservation of historic properties while allowing conversion of structures into bed and breakfast businesses in residential areas.
- Encourage the use of second floor commercial space in downtown as short term rentable space or rooms.
- Improve connectivity between Downtown and Highway 21 Corridor by creating a gateway into the city that will drive traffic and business into the downtown district.

## **Resource Management**

*Promotion of our historic buildings, cultural landmarks, recreational areas, greenspaces, and environmental assets such as Ebenezer Creek are still priorities. Goals have been modified to provide more specific guidance.*

- Take steps to prevent the loss of community character and heritage by providing protection of historic and cultural resources, specifically structures and landmarks in the historic district.
- Take steps to prevent the loss of cultural heritage by supporting conservation and education about historical and environmental aspects of Ebenezer Creek and intersecting waterways.
- Maintain historic district regulations to ensure cohesive infill development in Commercial Downtown
- Adopt and implement measures to regulate new construction and renovation of historic residences, especially near the Historic Courthouse.
- Support incentives for preservation and reuse of historic structures.
- Expand and improve greenspace and parkland by requiring areas to be set aside for active and passive recreation when new development occurs.
- Continue to hold high standards for landscaping and buffering to provide additional greenspaces/areas within commercial developments.

### **Local Preparedness**

*These goals have not been modified and are still relevant to the city's future planning.*

- Look for opportunity and funding to improve stormwater treatment and quality
- Work to stay ahead of demand for water and sewer needs by being proactive with capacity

### **Sense of Place**

*Support of downtown, neighborhood enrichment, and maintaining a small town feel are maintained as the core, especially as the city continues to grow. Goals have been modified slightly to become more descriptive and attainable.*

- Embrace traditional development patterns that create strong neighborhoods, walkable streets, and efficient delivery of services.
- Continue to support development that provides connectivity between commercial and residential areas with sidewalks and multiuse trails.
- Promote and encourage the central downtown where most of the shops and businesses are occupied and operating without losing high quality of life with small-town feel.
- Support and encourage alternative transportation route connections to downtown to enhance the small town feel and reduce vehicle traffic and need for parking.

### **Regional Cooperation**

*Goals maintain a focus on the Hwy 21 Corridor, Ebenezer Greenway, and providing connections between municipalities and Effingham County. Only slight modifications were made.*

- Coordinate with the County on Highway 21 Bypass design guidelines for cohesive and convenient development of the commercial corridor.
- Support a possible pedestrian and/or alternative transportation extension to Guyton.

- Support efforts to provide access to and preservation of Ebenezer Greenway both in the City of Springfield and unincorporated Effingham County.

### **Education**

*The City does not have its own educational system, but can still provide support to businesses. Goal has been modified to be clearer.*

- Support Downtown Development Authority efforts to provide access to and awareness of professional and business development education for local businesses.