MEMBERS $10 / NON-MEMBERS $25

SAVANNAH 2025 ECONOMIC TRENDS

The University of Georgia
Terry College of Business

AREA CHAMBER

PARKER
College of Business
Georgia Southern University

BB&T and SunTrust are now Truist

truist.com

Contents

ABOUT THE DATA (See Note Below)
Welcome to Savannah 4
Savannah Quick Facts 5

Featured Speakers
2025 Forecasts:
United States and Georgia 7
Terry College of Business, University of Georgia
Savannah MSA 25
Parker College of Business, Georgia Southern University

Economic Trends: Savannah 34
By the Department of Economics, Parker College of Business at Georgia Southern University
Economy 35
Gross Regional Product
Employment
Demographics 39
Population
Household Income
Industry 42
Construction
Health Care
Major Employers and Major Manufacturers
Military and Federal Government
Real Estate
Tourism
Infrastructure 50
Education
Port of Savannah: Georgia Ports Authority
Small Business Investment and Development
Taxes
Transportation: Roads, Rail, Water, Air
Utilities
Other 59
Workforce Development

NOTE: ABOUT THE DATA

This report was updated by the Department of Economics in association with the Center for Business Analytics and Economic Research (CBAER) in the Office of Research at Georgia Southern University. The Center meets the applied research needs of Georgia and Savannah's business and community organizations (https://research.georgiasouthern.edu/big/). Areas of research include regional economic forecasting, economic impact analysis, market analysis, economic development and business expansion, tourism development, survey-based research, and specialty reports on topics of state, regional and local interest. The Center's activities are intended to appeal to a broad range of constituencies, and the Center stands ready to enter into cooperative partnerships with public, private, and community organizations.

Data for this report are collected from public sources and generally lag one to two years behind the date the report is produced. Most data in this year's report are annual figures for 2023 but include data from 2024 when possible. This data may not accurately reflect the economic conditions that businesses and residents face currently. While GSU and the Savannah Chamber have made every attempt to provide the most reliable information available, they cannot be held liable for omissions or inaccuracies.

This report is published by the Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce, 101 East Bay Street (31401), P.O. Box 1628, Savannah, Georgia, (912) 644-6400. The Chamber would like to thank the many Savannah businesses and organizations that contributed to the information and analysis provided in this annual update. This edition was published in January 2025.

Additional resources and contact information are available on the Chamber's Web site: www.savannahchamber.com.

Welcome to Savannah

The metropolitan Savannah area benefits from a diverse mix of industry and services, a history of sustainable population growth, and a moderate tax structure that combine to help the regional economy maintain a healthy balance and quality of life that continues to rate among the nation's best. Savannah offers a charming blend of natural beauty and cultural significance. Live Oak trees, Spanish moss, and Southern magnolias are an important part of its landscape. Founded in 1733, Savannah stands as one of the oldest cities in the United States, boasting historic treasures like Fort Jackson, the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist, and the First African Baptist Church. Its culinary reputation is steeped in Southern tradition, featuring dishes like shrimp and grits, fried green tomatoes, and pecan pie. Rich in history, the city played pivotal roles in the American Revolution and the Civil War. Its arts and culture scene thrives with museums, galleries, theaters, and annual events like the Savannah Music Festival and the Savannah Film Festival. The city's quirky appeal further captivates visitors with tales of ghosts, vibrant nightlife, and unexpected delights at every turn.

Similarly to past years, Savannah continues to receive much recognition for both its business and cultural richness such as the "Best Cities in the US" (#3) *Travel + Leisure*, July 2024; "15 Most Beautiful Cities in America" (#1) *MSN Travel* , July 2024; "Top 10 Best Destination Weddings in the USA for Your Dream Ceremony" (#3) *Blogarama*, August 2024; "15 Best Hotels in Savannah That Make This Design Destination Memorable" *House Beautiful Online*, August 2024; "10 Best Places for a Multigenerational Vacation" *Southern Living*, August 2024; "Best Savannah Hole-in-the-Wall Restaurants in GA" *Newsbreak*, July 2024; "25 Most Walkable Towns in the USA" (#19) *Home Stratosphere*, July 2024; "17 Most Unmissable Solo Travel Destinations in the U.S" *Roadtrippers,* July 2024; "12 Best Hotels in Savannah in 2024" *Forbes*, July 2024; "13 Charming Towns in the US That You Should Put on Your Bucket List" (#2) *MSN Travel*, July 2024; "7 Summer Amtrak Trips That Offer Beautiful Beach Views" *The Travel*, July 2024.

Savannah is a cosmopolitan community with a European flair and "good bones" as exhibited by its strong business community and advanced infrastructure. While residents and visitors enjoy its rich heritage and historical atmosphere, Savannah continues to improve its business environment by infusing the area with advantages that benefit its major industries. This includes manufacturing, logistics, tourism, port operations, health care, military, and a growing presence of entertainment production, innovative technology firms, and entrepreneurs. The Savannah region continues to be an ideal choice for any relocating business, individual or family.

We invite you to bring your businesses and families to Savannah to join this vital and thriving community. We are ready to help you and your company become exciting new members of our beautiful city. For more information contact:

Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
Visit Savannah
101 E. Bay Street (31401)
Savannah, GA 31402-1628
912-644-6400 Fax: 912-644-6499
www.SavannahChamber.com
www.VisitSavannah.com

The following organizations are also available to assist you in your move to Savannah.

Savannah Economic Development
Authority (SEDA)
906 Drayton Street
Savannah, GA 31401
(912) 447-8450 Fax: (912) 447-8455
www.seda.org

The Creative Coast
2 E. Bryan St., Suite 100A
Savannah, GA 31401
(912) 665-7825
Email: admin@thecreativecoast.org
www.thecreativecoast.org

Savannah Entrepreneurial Center
801 E. Gwinnett Street
P.O. Box 1027
Savannah, GA 31402
(912) 652-3582 Fax: (912) 651-3175
www.savannahga.gov

Savannah Quick Facts

Tourism
Annual Visitors: more than 17.7 million (2023)
Nation's largest Historic Landmark District

Manufacturing
510 manufacturing businesses provide 29,622 jobs (2024 Q2)

Top 5 Manufacturing Employers (2024)

Gulfstream Aerospace Corp.	13,115
SNF	1,706
Hyundai Motor Group Metaplant America	1,119
Georgia-Pacific	1,030
JCB	982

Taxable Retail Sales (Estimated), Chatham County

2024	$12.3 Billion	2019	$8.1 Billion
2023	$12.2 Billion	2018	$7.6 Billion
2022	$11.4 Billion	2017	$7.1 Billion
2021	$9.5 Billion	2016	$6.6 Billion
2020	$7.9 Billion	2015	$6.7 Billion

43 Large Shopping Centers, 2 Regional Malls, Outlet Center
Source: GA Department of Revenue Statistical Reports.

Utilities
Southern Company and a choice of gas marketers
City of Savannah Water/Sewer

Culture
African-American Cultural Center
Art Galleries, Theaters and Museums
City Market Art Center
Fiesta Latina
Georgia Historical Society
Historic Forts Jackson, McAllister, Pulaski, and Screven
Historic Landmark District: Homes, Churches, and Cemeteries
Riverboat Cruises
Savannah Asian Festival
Savannah Black Heritage Festival
Savannah Book Festival
Savannah Film Festival
Savannah Jazz Festival and Jazz Society
Savannah Music Festival
Savannah Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus
Savannah Stopover Music Festival
Tybee Island Pirate Festival

Population* (Savannah MSA)
(Bryan, Chatham, and Effingham Counties)

2023	424,935	2020	405,668
2022	418,373	2010	348,640
2021	410,008	2000	293,000

Chatham County is ranked the 6th largest county in Georgia.
158,617 households (Savannah MSA, 2023)*
$74,632 median household income (Savannah MSA, 2023)*
**U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate.*

Subtropical Climate
Average Seasonal Temperatures

Spring	65.26°	Summer	81.40°
Autumn	67.87°	Winter	51.13°

Precipitation: 48.0" average rain per year

Recreation
Tybee Island Beaches & Pavilion
Boating, Marinas, Boat Ramps, Rowing, Aquatic Center
Fishing & Hunting, Camping, Wildlife Parks
Nightlife, Live Music
Savannah Civic Center, Entertainment
Public & Private Available: Golf Courses, Swimming & Tennis

Banks
151 Bank branches (www.yellowpages.com)
41 Credit Unions (www.yellowpages.com)

Schools & Churches
Public: 23 elementary schools, 8 K-8 schools,
8 middle schools, 11 high schools
5 charter schools (3 elementary, 1 K-10 and 1 middle)
Private: 23 elementary schools, 17 high schools, 16 Preschools
Higher Education: 17 universities, colleges and technical colleges
with estimated annual enrollment of about 78,000
About 622 churches (www.yellowpages.com)

Healthcare (Chatham County)
3 acute care hospitals 1,425+ beds, 1200+ doctors
46 skilled nursing care facilities

Media

Print Media	Frequency
Savannah Morning News	Daily
Statesboro Herald	Daily
Savannah Business Journal	Monthly
Effingham Now	Weekly
Bryan County News	Weekly
Bryan County Now	Weekly
Connect Savannah	Weekly
Effingham Herald	Weekly
Savannah Penny Saver	Weekly
Savannah Tribune	Weekly
The Savannah Herald	Weekly
The Island Packet	Daily
The West Chatham Neighbor	Monthly
The South Magazine	Bi-monthly
Coastal Empire Seniors	Monthly
La Voz Latina	Monthly
Savannah Magazine	Bi-monthly
Georgia Historical Quarterly	Quarterly
Savannah Jewish News	Weekly
Coastal Living	Quarterly

Television Stations / Radio Stations
See listings at www.yellowpages.com
NOTE: Media Web sites provide additional information

Comparable Home Prices, Zillow.com

Single Family Home (Home Value Index)	
City, State	**Dec.2024**
Raleigh, NC	$445,730
Nashville, TN	$440,409
Atlanta, GA	$437,783
Orlando, FL	$406,378
Charlotte, NC	$403,257
Gainesville, FL	$318,879
Savannah, GA	**$320,344**

Government

City of Savannah
Mayor, eight Aldermen, City Manager

Chatham County
Chairman, eight Commissioners, County Manager.
Other Chatham County municipalities: Bloomingdale, Garden City, Pooler, Port Wentworth, Thunderbolt, Tybee Island, and Vernonburg

Military & Federal Employment in Savannah and Hinesville MSAs
Military Personnel: 22,600
Federal Civilian Workers: 6,588

Retired military personnel in Savannah and 13 county surrounding area: approximately 12,840

Taxation 2024
Property Tax on $340,100 home
with $10,000 valuation freeze exemption:
Unincorporated Chatham County: $4,230
City of Savannah: $5,200

Sales Tax
Chatham County: 7% tax on the purchase of all goods and some services and 3% tax on food items
Other Counties: 7% tax on the purchase of all goods and some services and 3% tax on food items

Room Tax
Chatham County: 8% (plus 7% sales tax)
Tybee Island: 7% (plus 7% sales tax)

Personal Income Tax
Single: $230 on first $7,000 plus 5.75% of amount over $7,000
Married: $340 on first $10,000 plus 5.75% of amount over $10,000
Married filing separately: $170 on first $5,000 plus 5.75% of amount over $5,000

Workforce—Savannah MSA

Year	Employed	**Year**	Employed
2024	207,300	**2019**	189,900
2023	204,000	**2018**	185,800
2022	202,200	**2017**	180,800
2021	190,900	**2016**	177,600
2020	180,400	**2015**	173,000

Employment by Place of Work. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
2024 figure estimated from data through October.

Georgia is a "right to work" state.

Air Transportation
Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport has numerous daily nonstop flights. Airlines: Allegiant, American Airlines, Avelo Airlines, Breeze, Delta Air Lines, Frontier, JetBlue, Southwest, Sun Country Airlines, United

Foreign Trade Zone 104 is located at the airport.

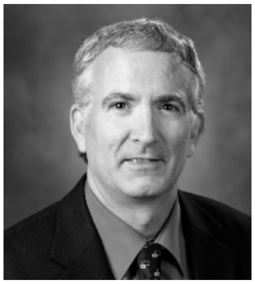
Ground and Water Transportation:
- CSX & Norfolk Southern Railroad
- Amtrak
- Airport/Amtrak Shuttle Service
- Greyhound
- Taxis and pedi-cabs
- Chatham Area Transit (local bus system)
- Water Ferry

Port of Savannah – Georgia Ports Authority
- Ships to 160+ countries
- Direct shipping to 800+ ports
- 30+ freighter lines
- 50+ freight forwarders & custom brokers

Highways/Interstates
U.S. 17, 17A, 80; GA 21, I-16, I-95, I-516
Driving distance to:
Atlanta – 250 miles
Charleston – 110 miles
Jacksonville – 140 miles

15 miles to Tybee Island and the Atlantic Ocean

Economic Development Agencies
Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce, (912) 644-6400
www.savannahchamber.com
Savannah Economic Development Authority, (912) 447-8450
www.seda.org
City of Savannah Office of Business Opportunity, (912) 652-3582
http://www.savannahga.gov/483/Office-of-Business-Opportunity
The Creative Coast, (912) 809-2935
www.thecreativecoast.org



The U.S. Economic Outlook for 2025

Jeffrey M. Humphreys
Terry College of Business, University of Georgia
(Revised on December 5, 2024)

The Terry College's 2025 baseline forecast for the US economy calls for slower economic growth. The lagged effects of the Federal Reserve's 2022 policy pivot from easy money to tight money is largely responsible for the slowdown. The slowdown in US GDP growth will be gradual. We predict US GDP will grow by 1.6 percent in 2025 compared to 2.5 percent in 2024. The slowdown in job growth while more pronounced that the slowdown in GDP growth will be gradual rather than steep. Indeed, our baseline forecast depends on job growth as well as the still strong financial position of households to sustain the post-pandemic economic expansion. In 2025, the Federal Reserve will further ease monetary policy with cuts in policy interest rates as well as the end of quantitative tightening. Barring an unexpected shock or policy mistake, the recent and continuing shift from tight money towards easy money should prevent economic growth from stalling, or declining.

If our forecast for 1.6 percent US GDP growth bears out, then the pace of GDP growth will be below the economy's potential rate of growth – approximately 2 percent GDP growth, but well above the economy's stall speed – less than 1 percent GDP growth. The labor market will be strong enough to stave off a recession. The US economy will be vulnerable to something else going wrong, however. The short list of possibilities includes (1) federal policy mistakes, (2) monetary policy mistakes, (3) an energy-price shock, (4) a stock market crash, (5) another banking/financial crisis that is less well contained than the 2023 "mini-crisis", or (6) a broadening of military conflicts abroad. Several imbalances increase the risk of recession, including annual federal budget deficits that exceed 6 percent of GDP, overvalued housing and stock markets, many financial institutions own too many overpriced bonds, and many nonbank financial institutions have extended a lot of credit. We put the probability of a US recession beginning in 2025 at 25 percent, which is lower than the 40 percent risk we estimated at this time last year, but above the 15 percent average, or typical, annual recession risk.

The lagged effects of Federal Reserve's aggressive tightening of monetary policy in 2022 and keeping policy interest rates at elevated levels through most of 2024 is the main reason we expect growth will slow in 2025. It is worth noting that the economic slowdown is not due to an economic shock. The policy pivot was successful in containing inflation without doing too much damage to the labor market and in turn to the overall US economy. Large increases in policy interest rates coupled with substantial reductions in the Federal Reserve's balance sheet – quantitative tightening – rapidly brought down the highest inflation rate in 40 years. Tight money gradually pushed up the unemployment rate just enough to dampen inflation without causing a recession, which an impressive achievement – the proverbial "soft landing."

The main factors behind the recent surge in inflation include supply chain problems, energy price shocks, unprecedented federal fiscal stimulus, and the very rapid growth of the money supply. The money supply expanded by 25 percent and by 13 percent in 2020 and 2021, respectively. Over 2022-24, almost all the major supply chain problems were resolved, which helped to rein in inflation. Energy prices retreated from the highs experienced in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Quantitative tightening reduced the money supply, which shrank by 1 percent and 2 percent in 2022 and 2023, respectively. In addition, demand-side drivers of inflation responded to higher interest rates. For example, housing quickly went into recession. Consumer and investment spending cooled. Federal fiscal stimulus to households ran its course. Put it all together and inflation dropped from 8.0 percent in 2022 to 4.1 percent in 2023 and to 3.0 percent in 2024.

Although the inflation rate was cut by more than 60 percent, it did not drop to the extremely low levels experienced prior to the pandemic recession. That is because several drivers of inflation did not improve. For example, a retreat from globalization (e.g., tariffs) and less favorable demographics are here to stay.

In addition, large annual federal budget deficits contribute to inflation, too. For these reasons, we expect inflation to remain at 3.0 percent in 2025. Indeed, over the next decade, we believe inflation will average about 3 percent per year compared to 2 percent per year prior to the pandemic. Eventually, we believe the Federal Reserve will raise its implicit – if not its explicit – inflation target to at least 2.5 percent from 2 percent.

One reason the economy will grow more slowly rather than contract is that we expect the Federal Reserve to lower policy interest rates by about 25 basis points per quarter in 2025, or by 100 basis points for the year. Another reason we expect the economy to grow very slowly rather than contract is because the labor market will remain resilient. Spending by households and businesses will grow rather than contract. Statistically, consumer spending is the main driver of the US economy and will make the largest contribution to GDP growth in 2025. We expect inflation-adjusted consumer spending growth to grow by about 2 percent, which equals the pace of growth expected for 2025. We expect business' spending on nonresidential investment to grow by about 3 percent. Businesses' spending on intellectual property and equipment growing faster than their spending on structures. In 2025, single-family housing will add to GDP growth, but multi-family homebuilding will subtract from GDP growth. Federal spending will subtract slightly from GDP growth, but spending by state and local governments will contribute to GDP growth. The net contribution of the government sector will be slightly negative. In addition, net exports and inventory changes will subtract slightly from US GDP growth.

As noted, we expect economic growth to slow, and the slowdown will be gradual. Specifically, inflation-adjusted GDP will grow by 1.6 percent in 2025 compared to 2.5 percent in 2024. GDP grew by 2.5 percent in 2023. The slowdown in job growth will be more pronounced than the slowdown in GDP growth. Non-farm employment will grow by 0.6 percent in 2025 compared to 1.2 percent in 2024, 2.3 percent in 2023, and 4.3 percent in 2022. The unemployment rate will rise slightly from 4.1 percent in 2024 to 4.3 percent in 2025, an increase of 0.2 percentage points. The rise in unemployment therefore will not be enough to trigger a pullback in consumer spending. Consumers will continue to increase spending at a moderate pace, but the composition of spending will shift away from luxuries towards necessities. Consumers will be more price sensitive that at any time since the pandemic related lockdowns ended.

Although GDP growth will slow, we expect employers to hold onto workers more tenaciously than usual given recent difficulties filling positions. The emphasis will be on slowing hiring and reducing hours worked rather than layoffs. That will help ensure that a recession is avoided. Nominal personal income will grow by about 4.1 percent in 2025, which is only slightly slower than the 4.3 percent pace expected for 2024. Inflation was 8.0 percent in 2022, 4.1 percent in 2023, and 3.0 percent in 2024. We expect inflation will be 3.0 percent in 2025. Our baseline forecast assumes that nothing else will go wrong with the US economy. If that sanguine assumption holds, we believe the odds favor expansion over recession, modest job growth, low unemployment, low inflation, and steady home prices.

Consumer Spending

On an inflation-adjusted basis, we expect personal consumption expenditures to increase at an annual rate of about 2 percent in 2025, which is about the same gain estimated for 2024. The modest growth in consumer spending reflects (1) exhaustion of most of the excess savings households accumulated during the pandemic, (2) higher – but still low – unemployment, (3) less job hopping (lower quit rates), (4) some erosion of the relatively strong economic and financial positions households achieved over 2021-24, and (5) steady home prices.

Consumers spent more on an inflation-adjusted basis in 2022-24 by using most of the unanticipated excess savings accumulated during the first two years of the pandemic. Now, households' excess savings is mostly, but not entirely, depleted. Older, higher-income, high-net worth households saved the most and appear to be using a lot of their unplanned accumulations as retirement savings – or to fund long-term investments – and did not spend the money aggressively in 2022-24. In contrast, low- and middle-income consumers spent down their excess savings. The demographics of the big savers therefore will spread the spending from accumulated savings over many years, which will advantage the businesses that cater to their needs. Households' excess savings therefore will continue to support consumer spending in 2025, but to minor extent compared to 2022-24. We expect a personal savings rate out of current income of 4 percent in 2025, which is the same as in 2024, but is only about half the pre-pandemic savings rate of about 8 percent. The low savings rate will help consumers sustain their spending as the economy slows and the labor market softens.

In 2025, we expect an unusual degree of job security for an economy that is slowing. That will support consumer spending. We expect the unemployment rate to rise, but not very much and not fast. Stable labor market conditions will maintain consumer confidence. Because consumer confidence never rallied very much in the wake of the pandemic it should be easy to sustain. In addition, the low starting point for the anticipated rise in the unemployment rate is a positive for consumer spending. Because the labor market will not be quite as tight, compensation per hour will rise by about 2 percent in 2025 compared to 3 percent in 2024, and to 4 percent in 2023. Output per hour worked and unit labor costs will both rise by about 1 percent. Wage and salary income will grow, but the pace of growth will slow. We do not expect any major new federal government stimulus programs.

In 2025, consumer credit outstanding will grow by about 5 percent, which is the same pace estimated for 2024. Credit will be slightly less expensive than in 2024, but much more expensive that just a few years ago. Nonetheless, recent inflation and deferred demand for vehicles will push consumers to use more credit. In 2025, we expect non-revolving credit to grow faster than revolving credit. In 2023-24, lenders tightened credit to customers, but we do not expect very much additional tightening in 2025. Non-traditional lenders will continue to offer credit to customers.

Household balance sheets are in decent shape, which will support credit growth. As the economy slows, delinquent payments and bankruptcies will continue to increase, but to levels considered normal prior to the pandemic. Indeed, many households are still well positioned to take on and service additional credit. Debt burdens borne by many households are low. Households deleveraged in the wake of the Great Recession and deleveraging continued throughout the COVID-19 recession. Specifically, the ratio of debt service payments to households after tax income fell to 9 percent in 2021. The ratio rose to 10 percent in 2024, which is considered low. In comparison, the debt service ratio was 13 percent leading up to the Great Recession. Another positive for consumer spending is that many households have locked in historically low mortgage rates, but higher payments for property taxes and home insurance will offset some of the benefit of lower payments on principal and interest.

We assume that wealth-effect spending will be a neutral force. In the wake of the pandemic-recession, the global savings glut caused the prices of most types of assets to be bid up. The runup in home prices boosted households' net worth. One reason we assume wealth-effect spending will not add much to spending is that when it comes to spending changes in households' wealth are more important than its absolute level. We do not expect major changes in households' net worth in 2025. For example, because US homes are moderately overvalued and income growth is slowing, home prices are unlikely to increase very much in 2025. Flat to slightly lower prices for homes will limit any gain in households' wealth. In addition, by historical measures, equities are very richly valued. We do not expect higher equity prices to add much to households' wealth in 2025. Indeed, equity markets will be vulnerable to correction. Bond prices are likely to increase in 2025, but not enough to add substantially to households' wealth.

Although we do not expect changes in households' net worth to boost spending in 2025, a sharp reversal of wealth-effect spending is a plausible downside risk for consumer spending. Growth in household wealth increased over 2009-24, exceeding income growth in most years. Household wealth may decline in 2025. Nonetheless, due to large gains over the extended period, it would take a major collapse in home prices and/or a major stock market reversal to produce a dramatic decline in consumers overall spending. We do not expect especially sharp corrections in the prices of homes or equites, but should sharp corrections occur, households' spending would contract, the economic expansion would end, and a recession would begin.

In 2025, spending for services will increase faster than spending for goods. The gradual rebalancing in the composition of consumer spending towards services and away from goods will continue. Among services, providers of health care, education, vehicle repairs, and childcare will see above average growth in spending. We believe that there is a strong possibility that the pandemic caused a structural shift in consumers' spending that favors goods over services. High-contact service businesses may never claim the percentage of GDP that they did prior to the pandemic. It will take years for some types of service businesses to fully recover from the pandemic. A few service industries in decline prior to the pandemic will not fully recover (e.g., movie theatres).

Sales of both durable and nondurable goods are expected to increase, with spending for durables increasing faster than spending for nondurable goods. The main factor behind above-average spending for durable goods will be higher spending for vehicles. Because consumers were unable to buy what is not available, new vehicle sales in 2021-24 would have been stronger if not for supply shortages. Therefore, we expect vehicle sales to rise from 16 million units in 2024 to 17 million units in 2025. That is not usually what transpires during an economic slowdown. The expectation for higher vehicle sales reflects the release pent-up demand (e.g., deferred replacement needs) for new vehicles as supply constraints ease. Pent up demand for vehicles is substantial. People have not been able to replace older vehicles. In 2024, the average age of the vehicle fleet rose to a record 12.6 years, up two months over 2023.

There are additional factors that bode well for future vehicle sales. In post-pandemic America, people are less inclined to use public transportation – or ride share – and more inclined to use personally-owned vehicles. Similarly, car, light truck, and recreational vehicle sales will benefit from peoples' greater interest in traveling by car to destinations closer to home rather than to far-flung destinations by plane or cruise ship. Strong sales of boats, campers, and trailers support sales of trucks and other personal vehicles capable of towing heavy loads. In addition, stronger preferences for detached homes in the suburbs – or rural areas – over attached housing in, or near, city centers support demand for new vehicles, especially light trucks. Our sanguine outlook for sales of personal vehicles assumes that labor disputes and supply chain issues are mostly resolved.

Price increases and demographic factors will cause spending on pharmaceuticals and other medical products to rise. Spending on grocery items will rise modestly as consumers trade down from restaurants to food prepared at home. One result will be more intense competition among restaurants, which will lead to margin compression. Spending on clothing and footwear will decrease slightly. Little or no home price appreciation will limit sales of durable household equipment, building materials, fixtures, floor coverings, furniture as well as other home-related goods and services. Consumers' spending on luxury goods should slow in line with the slowdown of the overall economy, and such spending will be sensitive to the performance of the US stock market.

Labor Markets

In 2025, total nonfarm employment will increase by 0.6 percent compared to 1.2 percent in 2024, 2.3 percent in 2023, and 4.3 percent in 2022. Most job growth will be single-family homebuilding, health care, education, and state & local government. Professional and business services firms will see modest job growth. Transportation and manufacturing, typically cyclical industries, are not expected to lose jobs. Jobs will be lost in non-residential construction, multi-family construction, financial activities, mining and logging, information, and retailing.

In 2025, the less widespread availability of jobs means the quit rate will continue to drop as workers feel less confident in their ability to find better opportunities. That will limit wage and salary gains because job switchers tend to see higher than average increases in compensation. The lower quit rate therefore reduces inflationary pressures.

Industrial production and the number of manufacturing jobs will increase in 2025. Capacity utilization will be 77 percent, which is the same level as in 2024. Reshoring production is a positive factor for manufacturing job growth. Indeed, reshoring will be especially important to industries favored by recent shifts in US industrial policy. It follows that semiconductor and electric vehicle manufacturers will be hiring. Less positively, trade tensions and past appreciation of the U.S. dollar will be headwinds for industrial production.

One factor to consider is that many of the new post-pandemic jobs are not in the places where workers currently live. People moved to less dense and more remote locations creating job opportunities in their new places of residence, but reduced job opportunities in the places they left behind. For example, there are fewer restaurant jobs available in large-city centers and more available in the suburbs or in small towns. It takes years for workers to move to where the new jobs are available. On the net, this realignment of jobs will not determine the overall pace of US economic growth but may intensify effects of the economic slowdown in larger metropolitan areas and lessen the effects of the slowdown in suburban areas and small towns. Regionally, this realignment of jobs benefits the South (e.g., Georgia) and costs the Northeast (e.g., New York).

With labor force and job growth in balance, the US unemployment rate will rise only slightly, from 4.1 percent in 2024 to 4.3 percent in 2025. The rise in the unemployment rate will mostly reflect less hiring rather than more layoffs. The unemployment rate will be above the economy's full employment unemployment rate of about 4.0 percent, which reduces pressures on wages and benefits. Accordingly, we expect less traction for wage-push inflation.

With the unemployment rate slowly rising, the balance of power slowly shifts to buyers of labor (employers) from sellers of labor (workers). Employers that have struggled to increase staffing fast enough to keep pace with rising demand for goods and services will find it a little easier to reload their workforce. Nonetheless, widespread recognition that labor markets will be tight over the next decade due to slower growth of the working-age population will sharply limit layoffs in 2025. Employers will not have the upper hand to the extent that they have had in past economic slowdowns.

Once the slowdown ends and the economy begins to accelerate, it will quickly become more difficult to hire workers across many occupations and industries. Workers of all types will be in short supply due to demographic trends that are less favorable to labor force expansion than in the past. Indeed, demographic trends (e.g., low birth rates) suggest that unless foreign immigration is strong a shortage of workers could be a feature of the post-pandemic U.S. economy, which is only occasionally interrupted by recessions. That bodes well for an eventual rebalancing of income from capital to labor, which should help to reduce inequalities in income. Unless productivity grows faster than in previous decades, slower labor force and population growth means slower economic growth. To a greater degree than in prior decades, the economies of states with significantly above-average population and labor force growth (whether due to domestic migration or foreign immigration) will outperform the economies of states with below average growth population and labor force growth.

Housing

Home sales and homebuilding were important drivers of US GDP growth in 2020-21, but single-family housing activity subtracted from GDP growth in 2022-23. High mortgage rates and the recent run up in single-family home prices dramatically reduced housing affordability, which put the nation's housing industry into recession. In 2025, slightly lower mortgage rates, good labor market conditions and a scarcity of single-family homes for sale will support an upturn in single-family homebuilding.

Demand for owner-occupied housing that was not satisfied in 2020-24 (due to shortages of homes for sale, shortages of building materials, and shortages of construction workers) will support higher construction of new single-family homes. Sales of both new and existing single-family homes will rise. Millennials are reaching the age where they will buy homes in larger numbers, especially in Southern and Western states where overall population growth is stronger than in other regions.

It is likely that the pandemic caused a structural shift that favors owner-occupied housing over rental housing and low-density housing over high-density housing. Telework at scale, distance education, more caregiving at home, more recreation and entertainment at home, and wider recognition of the health benefits of social distancing make the home more important and more valuable to people. Such trends favor home ownership, especially the single-family detached house. The 2025 economic slowdown will not change those dynamics. The greater acceptance of remote work and remote education means that families need more space at home. Put it all together and people are willing to pay more for a single-family home than prior to the pandemic. Homes therefore are more valuable than indicated by traditional metrics. In short, homes are slightly overvalued, but are not substantially overvalued.

The pandemic caused older homeowners to stay in their single-family homes longer than originally planned, postponing their moves to retirement communities or assisted living facilities. The postponement of moves by elderly homeowners to multiunit housing arrangements means fewer existing single-family homes are on the market to satisfy buyers' needs. More new home construction is needed.

Another reason home prices will not decline too much is that the Great Recession destroyed much of the supply chain for new home construction and caused workers to permanently exit the construction trades. Because few homes were built in the recovery that followed the Great Recession, single-family homes remained in truly short supply throughout the post-pandemic housing boom. Inventories of homes for sale will remain lean throughout 2025. There is a need to build more single-family houses.

We expect the price of existing single-family homes to hold steady in 2025. The main reason home prices will not rise any further is decreased affordability due to both high mortgage rates and recent sharp increases in home prices. According to the National Association of Realtors single-family homes were 37 percent less affordable in mid-2024 than in 2021. Another factor behind home price declines is that homes are overvalued by traditional metrics. As of mid-2024, Moody's Analytics estimated that homes were overvalued by 11 percent. Absent strong income growth and/or substantial reductions in mortgage interest rates, home prices are unlikely to rise significantly. Neither strong income growth nor especially sharp reductions in mortgage rates are likely in 2025. Nonetheless, we expect single-family home prices to hold steady rather than decline due to a scarcity of listings, solid demographic support, and the increased importance of the single-family home as a place to live, to work, to learn, and to play. In addition, overvaluation is not as extreme as it was prior to the Great Recession. It is worth remembering that single-family home prices are notoriously sticky to the downside. Despite overvaluation large declines in home prices are extremely unlikely. Indeed, on a year-over-year basis U.S. home prices have never declined when there was less than 6 months' supply of homes for sale. At the time of this writing, the supply of homes for sale was only 3 months and we do not expect supplies of homes for sale to increase very much in 2025.

Non-Residential Construction

Overall spending for new nonresidential construction will increase only slightly in 2025. Private-sector spending will be less vigorous than public spending, but both will increase. In the private sector, there is a need for more manufacturing, healthcare, and educational facilities, however. Lab space is in short supply. The CHIPS and Science Act provides over $200 billion in federal funds to promote domestic semiconductor production, which will boost spending on chip manufacturing facilities. Investors are interested in new properties because real estate holdings are a hedge against inflation. In addition, overvalued equity markets will make investors interested in income-producing property as an asset class.

Spending for nonresidential construction therefore will increase but will lack vigor because interest rates will still be high, uncertainty will be too high, top line sales growth will slow, vacancy rates will be elevated for office and retail space, and net absorption will be negative for office and retail space. Trade tensions, dollar strength, and travel restrictions will continue to dampen foreign investors' interest in US nonresidential real estate, but probably not to a greater degree than in 2020-24.

In 2025, there will be bright spots. For example, private spending will increase to build manufacturing and research and development facilities. In addition, construction spending by federal, state, and local governments will increase. In contrast, there will be little interest in building new office buildings or shopping centers. Office and retail vacancy rates are high in too many markets. Moreover, we expect vacancy rates to increase in 2025. COVID-19 accelerated the trend towards remote work, which reduces office headcounts and the overall demand for commercial office space. The result is less utilization of commercial office space per dollar of US GDP. Demand for new commercial office space will be most resilient in lower-density urban and suburban markets, especially where high technology and health care industries are concentrated. One positive factor is that the construction pipeline was not very full at the onset of the pandemic. Hence, the delivery of projects in the development pipeline does not hurt the prospects for office construction to the extent that it did in the wake of the Great Recession.

Even though consumers' spending on goods recovered quickly and is well above pre-pandemic levels, retail is overbuilt and under demolished. The abundance of retail space will limit new retail construction, but some will occur in places that benefited from heavy in-migration of teleworkers and retirees. Financing to build new retail space will be difficult to obtain, but some will be available for the repurposing of retail space in good locations. The success of online retailing decreases the need to build shopping centers and stores but increases the need to build distribution centers. Industrial development will be focused on locations with logistical advantages.

Public sector spending for nonresidential construction will increase faster than private spending for nonresidential construction. Revenue collections by state and local governments held up better throughout the pandemic than initially feared. In addition, federal government transfers to state and local governments were massive. Many state and local governments recognize that recent revenue gains are unlikely to be repeated and therefore direct revenue surpluses to one-time uses, such as construction projects, rather than to continuing obligations such as hiring permanent staff. Construction spending by local governments will increase faster than such spending by state governments due to local governments' high reliance on property taxes. Courtesy of the housing boom, many local governments' property tax digests are soaring and will continue to do so. In contrast, nonresidential property tax digests will grow, but slowly. In most jurisdictions, overall property tax digests will benefit from upward adjustments in assessed residential property values, but jurisdictions with high proportions of office and retail properties may not see much overall growth in property tax digests.

Typically, assessed property values lag movements in market prices by several years. In 2025, property tax bases therefore will benefit from recent strong increases in residential real estate prices. In contrast, local governments' property tax bases in jurisdictions tilted towards commercial real estate or office buildings will be less supportive of revenue collections and in turn public construction.

Businesses' Spending for Equipment & Software

We expect spending for equipment and software to increase by about 3 percent in 2025 compared to 4 percent in 2024. Slower economic growth will reduce both confidence and cash flow. In the wake of the 2023 mini-banking crisis, lending standards have tightened and will not loosen appreciably in 2025. We expect banks to maintain a risk-off stance. High interest rates are a negative for investment spending, more so for equipment than for intellectual property. High labor costs coupled with slower top line growth will squeeze corporate profit margins, which will be a headwind for investment spending. Capacity utilization will be 77 percent, which is too low to stimulate stronger investment spending.

Another negative is that many companies took on a lot of debt during the pandemic. Companies refinanced older debt to lower interest expenses and push out debt maturities, but often bond issuance exceeded the amount of debt retired. High interest rates will encourage deleveraging, which reduces funds available for investment spending. Of course, many companies are sitting on accumulations of cash which could simultaneously allow for higher investment spending and deleveraging.

On the positive side, the pandemic accelerated technology-centric trends ranging from remote work to online shopping, to mobile banking, to telemedicine, and to video conferencing. These developments support spending for equipment and intellectual property and make such spending less cyclical than in the past. The accelerated adoption of existing technologies, tight labor markets, and competitive pressures will push businesses to spend more for equipment and intellectual property. Once the economic slowdown is over, businesses' spending on equipment and intellectual property therefore will be a powerful driver of US GDP growth. An imperative to improve productivity will support such spending.

International Trade

In 2025, the global economy will grow more slowly than in 2024. That is partially due to our expectation that tariffs will increase substantially. International trade therefore will provide less support to US businesses. In addition, in too many countries, taming inflation did not occur quickly, which delays easing by foreign central banks. We expect net exports to subtract slightly from 2025 US GDP growth. Although the Federal Reserve will be cutting policy interest rates, the lagged effects of foreign central bankers tightening of monetary policies to combat high inflation will restrain global spending by consumers and businesses. We believe global and domestic stock markets are vulnerable to corrections, which would slow global growth. Geopolitical risks abound, including a broadening of the conflicts in Eastern Europe and the Middle East as well as the tense situation between Taiwan and China.

Uncertainty about US trade policy adds considerable downside risk to the forecast for international trade. At a minimum, trade tensions will remain high and existing tariffs will increase. It is reasonable to expect the effective tariff rate on imported goods to triple from about 3 percent in 2024 to about 9 percent by the end of 2025, or early in 2026. The bottom line is that we expect protectionist trade policies to become more prevalent domestically and globally, which is bad for trade, productivity, GDP growth, and inflation.

Another obstacle to faster US export growth will be past appreciation of the US dollar. We expect the US dollar to appreciate further in 2025, but the additional appreciation will be minor compared to the appreciation that has recently transpired. The increase in the dollar's trade-weighted value therefore will make it harder to export goods and easier to import goods, reducing net exports.

UNITED STATES BASELINE FORECAST 2024-2025

United States	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Gross Domestic Product, Bil. of 2017$	20,234.1	21,407.7	21,822.0	22,376.9	22,939.3	23,303.3
Percent change	-2.2	5.8	1.9	2.5	2.5	1.6
Nonfarm Employment (Mil.)	142.2	146.3	152.5	156.1	157.9	158.9
Percent change	-5.8	2.9	4.3	2.3	1.2	0.6
Personal Income, Bil. of $	19,629.0	21,407.7	21,840.8	22,961.3	23,948.6	24,930.5
Percent change	6.9	9.1	2.0	5.1	4.3	4.1
Civilian Unemployment Rate (%)	8.1	5.3	3.6	3.6	4.1	4.3
CPI-U, Ann. % Chg.	1.2	4.7	8.0	4.1	3.0	3.0

Source: The Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, University of Georgia.

The Georgia Outlook for 2025

Jeffrey M. Humphreys

Terry College of Business, University of Georgia

The 2025 baseline forecast for Georgia's economy calls for a mild economic slowdown. Georgia is very well positioned to weather an economic slowdown. Georgia's inflation-adjusted GDP has fully recovered from the pandemic-recession. Georgia's total employment is well above its pre-pandemic peak level. In addition, there are many large projects in the state's economic development pipeline, including Hyundai's plan to begin operations of its massive electric vehicle manufacturing plant near Savannah – the largest economic development project in Georgia's history. In 2025, Georgia economy therefore is likely to outperform the US economy, especially with respect to job growth.

The 2025 forecast calls for Georgia's inflation-adjusted GDP to increase by 2.4 percent, which is 0.8 percentage points above the 1.6 percent rate increase expected for US GDP. Similarly, Georgia's nonfarm employment will rise by 1.0 percent in 2025, which is better than the 0.6 percent increase estimated for the US. Georgia's unemployment rate for 2025 will average 4.0 percent, up only 0.3 percentage points from its 2023 unemployment rate of 3.7 percent, but up 0.8 percentage points from 2023. The increase in the labor force will be mainly due to labor force growth that exceeds job growth rather than mass layoffs. Georgia's unemployment rate will remain below the US unemployment rate. Georgia's nominal personal income will grow by 4.7 percent in 2025, which is 2.2 percentage points above our expectation of 2.5 percent inflation for 2024. The economic slowdown will be the main factor behind slower personal income growth, but we expect a smaller contribution to income from capital gains than in recent years.

There are several developments that may cause Georgia's economy to perform better than our forecast predicts. For example, the Federal Reserve may cut policy interest rates faster than we expect. Tariffs may not increase as much as expected. Oil and natural gas prices could be lower than we expect. Net domestic migration and foreign immigration to Georgia might be stronger than we expect. Consumer spending out of savings accumulated during the pandemic or current income could be stronger than we expect. Finally, the economic push to Georgia's economy from several years – 2021 through 2024 – of elevated levels of economic development projects could prove stronger than we expect.

In 2025, state-specific forces that will help Georgia's economy to outperform the nation's economy include: (1) the build out of many projects in Georgia's economic development pipeline; (2) competitive state-level economic development incentives that help refill Georgia's economic development pipeline; (3) more leverage than most states from new vehicle sales; (4) strong performance of the state's transportation and logistics industry, especially Georgia's deepwater ports; (5) solid prospects for Georgia's military bases; and (8) domestic migration trends that are very supportive of economic growth. For example, Georgia's population will grow more than twice as fast as the US population due primarily to the in-migration of workers and retirees from other states. Georgia's labor force therefore will grow faster than the US labor force.

Most sectors of Georgia's economy will continue to expand – albeit more slowly. Health services, private education, and arts/entertainment/recreation will post the fastest job growth among Georgia's major industry sectors. Homebuilding, food and accommodations, transportation and logistics, manufacturing, mining, and finance will see moderate rates of job growth. Professional and business services, government, and other services will see slow, but positive job growth. Although retail sales will increase, small number of retail jobs will be lost due to the substitution of online shopping for in-store shopping, the realignment of consumer spending from goods to services, and other factors. We expect a substantial decline in the number of information jobs.

Prospects for Service Producing Industries
Above average population and job growth as well as households' ongoing shift in spending priorities from goods towards services will support the expansion of many types of service-related businesses. We expect higher demand for health care, education, business and professional services, digital services, home services, data centers, and technology services. In addition, a lengthy list of projects in Georgia's economic development pipeline will be building out and become operational in 2025, which creates new demand for industries that provide services to these new or expanded operations.

Georgia's large, well-established, cluster of Fin-Tech companies will fare well. FinTech, transactions processing, data processing, cyber security, and development of software and mobile apps will continue to support Georgia's economic growth. FinTech industry received a boost from the COVID-19 crisis because contagion fears pushed people to adopt new mobile technologies, including mobile banking and touchless payment systems. Most customers are pleased with such services and fully embrace these new ways of banking and shopping.

One of the main reasons why Fin-Tech companies locate in Georgia is the substantial number of existing companies ensures deep pools of experienced workers with the specialized talents needed. Going forward, we expect this advantage to increase rather than diminish. Georgia's post-secondary education system is focused on the production of new talent for the Fin-Tech industry. The Fintech cluster of companies in the Atlanta MSA has grown rapidly. The Georgia FinTech Academy – available at most of the University System of Georgia's 26 institutions – will provide the talent needed to attract more financial technology companies to Georgia.

In 2025, we expect Georgia's cyber security industry to grow. The COVID-19 crisis dramatically boosted the use of online and digital services, which increases the need for cyber security. Indeed, the digital transformation of many industries, ranging from health care, to entertainment, to mobile banking, was an existing trend that the pandemic dramatically accelerated. The speed of this widespread digital transformation increases the risks of cyber-attacks, which puts Georgia's cyber security industry onto higher short- and long-term growth trajectories. In addition, the weaponization of cyber-attacks to achieve military or political objectives increases demand for cyber security.

According to Business Facilities magazine Georgia's cyber security industry ranks eighth nationally in 2024, up from ninth in 2023. Georgia's cyber security industry is located primarily in Atlanta and Augusta. Talent is the key to Atlanta's success whereas the presence of the US Army Cyber Command at Fort Gordon and Georgia Cyber Center are the foundations of Augusta's cyber security economy. Fort Gordon provides a critical mass of dependable contracts. The Georgia Cyber Center provides the leadership and talent needed to attract more cyber security firms to Georgia.

Healthcare IT and telemedicine will create thousands of high-paying jobs in Georgia over the next decade. The COVID-19 crisis accelerated the adoption of telemedicine by traditional healthcare providers, which got large segments of the population accustomed to the online delivery of healthcare. Many patients continue to use online healthcare, which bodes well for healthcare providers, healthcare IT companies, and cyber security companies. Georgia is attracting and growing healthcare IT companies.

Georgia's data center industry is thriving. Atlanta's data center market ranks seventh nationally and once the space under construction is delivered the metro area is likely to rise several spots in the national rankings. Remote work, the Internet of Things, AI, the Cloud, the greater adoption, and use of a wide range of digital applications and high-speed streaming will drive demand growth. The outsourcing of data operations will power growth of colocation service providers that specialize in data center operations. The main challenge to even faster growth will be ensuring that ample supplies of electricity are available for this energy intensive industry.

The build out of headquarters projects is an important force powering Georgia's current and future economic growth. The Home Depot, United Parcel Services, Delta Air Lines, the Coca-Cola Company, Southern Company, Genuine Parts, WestRock, Aflac, PulteGroup, and Asbury Automotive Group are the ten largest (by revenue) firms headquartered in Georgia. Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport and

Georgia's ideal geographic location makes Georgia a good hub from which to serve operations in the Americas. In addition, access to talent and the strength of the business community are important drivers of headquarters locations in the Atlanta MSA. According to FEMA, Georgia has a minimal risk for business disruption due to natural disasters, which we believe will be an increasingly important consideration for headquarters locations. Thirty-three companies with headquarters in metro Atlanta rank among the 2024 Fortune 1,000 and sixteen rank among the Fortune 500. NCR Atleos, Chart Industries, and Mativ Holdings were added to the list in 2024. Prior to the pandemic (2019), metro Atlanta was home to 26 Fortune 1000 companies.

The outlook for Georgia's large healthcare industry is good. We expect the number of healthcare jobs in Georgia to increase in 2025. Due to the essential need for healthcare and favorable demographic trends, the prospects for providers of ambulatory health care are particularly good. In 2025, we expect providers of nursing and residential care to benefit from an upturn in business that will lead to higher employment, but family members will continue to provide more care to aged and ill relatives at home than prior to the pandemic. On a more optimistic note, the recent runup in home prices gives a higher proportion of homeowners who want to move into nursing and residential care facilities the means to do so.

The bottom line is that Georgia's growing, aging population will demand more healthcare services, which broadens the industry's economic growth to include lagging subsectors – nursing facilities, residential care facilities, and hospitals. Large numbers of baby boomers are reaching the age where the incidence of heart attacks, strokes, cancer, and other care-intensive problems begin to rise rapidly. The population of persons with multiple chronic health conditions that require ongoing healthcare continues to grow regardless of the vicissitudes of the business cycle or healthcare policy. Of course, there's intractable disagreement about who will pay the bills, which is a headwind for the healthcare industry's growth.

In 2025, Georgia technology industries will find it slightly easier and slightly less expensive to obtain funding compared to 2024, but harder and more expensive compared to a few years ago. Therefore, we expect Georgia technology industry to see faster growth in 2025 than in 2024, but slower growth than in 2021-23. Several factors will encourage providers of high-tech and highly specialized professional services to favor sites in Georgia – especially the Atlanta MSA, including the good business climate, logistical advantages in terms of serving far-flung clients, the available professional workforce, and a large annual output of newly minted college graduates. Many changes created by the COVID-19 pandemic will generate business for providers of professional services and consultants. For example, the accelerated adoption of high-tech trends generates businesses for providers of high-tech services. Similarly, recent increases in regulations at all levels of government generate business for consultants. Providers of business services that either lower costs or provide necessities should do well.

Activity in Georgia's transportation and logistics industry is notoriously cyclical, but barring labor disputes we expect the industry's growth to accelerate in 2025. Georgia's transportation and logistics industry will expand and outperform that of the nation. One state-specific factor behind our sanguine forecast for Georgia's transportation and logistics industry is the abundance of logistics and distribution projects in Georgia's economic development pipeline. Similarly, the build out of recent economic development projects involving the relocation and expansion of manufacturers bodes well for the performance of Georgia's transportation and logistics industry. Additional state-specific drivers include the outstanding performance of the Port of Savannah and the Port of Brunswick. Improvements in the state's transportation infrastructure will expand the Georgia's importance as a regional and nation logistics and distribution center. Above-average population growth also will benefit Georgia's transportation and logistics industry. The accelerated shift from physical retail to online retail benefitted Georgia's distribution and logistics industry in 2020-24 and will continue to do so, but the ongoing shift in households' spending priorities from goods to services will be a headwind.

In 2025, we expect cargo volumes will outpace US-GDP growth. That will be quite an accomplishment for an industry that typically moves in lockstep with the overall economy. The 2018 opening of the Appalachian Regional Port is helping the Port of Savannah tap into new markets and helps economic developers bring more projects to Georgia. In early 2026, the Georgia Port Authority will open a second inland container port – Blue Ridge Connector – near I-985 in Gainesville. The inland port will accept

200,000 containers per year and deliver them to the Port of Savannah by rail. The Mason Mega-Rail Terminal at the Port of Savannah provides frequent and fast rail services to Midwestern cities like Memphis, St. Louis, Chicago, and cities in the Ohio Valley. The Mason-Mega Rail Terminal doubles the Port of Savannah's rail capacity, making it the largest on-dock rail terminal at any port in North America. Meanwhile, the Savannah Harbor Deepening Project is complete. The high-tide depth of 54 feet allows larger container ships to navigate the channel with fewer tidal and loading restrictions. The Port Authority's "Peak Capacity' project recently delivered 820,000 TEUs of additional capacity. The capacity is needed. In fiscal year 2024, the Port of Savannah moved 5.25 million TEUs containers. Plans call for the Port of Savannah to move from a 7.0 million TEU capacity port to a 12 million TEU capacity port in less than a decade. In 2024, the Port of Brunswick handled 876,000 units of autos and high/heavy machinery, but that included cargo diverted from the Port of Baltimore. The Port of Brunswick's current annual capacity is about 1 million units and plans call for the annual throughput capacity of about 1.4 million units.

Many of the major distribution and logistics project announcements over 2022-24 will be building out. For example, Burlington Stores will open a 2 million-square-foot distribution center in the Interstate West Industrial Park near Savannah in 2026. P&B Cold Storage announced plans to build a new cold storage facility in Valdosta that create 100 jobs when in opens in early 2025. In 2024, Aertssen Logistics announced that it will open an equipment processing center near the Port of Savannah. In 2023, Sam's Club announced plans to build a new distribution center in Lithia Springs that will create 600 new jobs. In 2023, Bradshaw Homes announced plans to build its East Coast distribution center near the Port of Savannah, creating over 230 jobs. In 2023, Plastics Express announced that it would double its Georgia operations, building a second shipping facility in Savannah that would create about 200 new jobs. In 2022, Procter & Gamble announced that it would build a new distribution center in Butts County, creating 350 jobs. In 2022, Duluth Trading Company announced that it will build a new distribution and fulfillment facility in Bartow County that will create 300 jobs. In 2022, Ryder Systems choose Locust Grove for its new, high-tech third party-distribution center, creating 250 jobs.

In 2024, major labor disputes (strikes) reducing spending by Georgia's film industry. Assuming labor disputes are settled, we expect Georgia's film industry to continue to recover in 2025. Business Facilities magazine currently ranks Georgia No. 1 in motion picture and television production. State incentives account for the recent growth of Georgia's film industry. Incentives will help ensure that nearly all studio space is booked. The Georgia Film Academy helps to ensure that well-trained workers are available. Georgia's growing diversity of locations provides a good fit for a wide range of film and TV productions. For example, Pigmental Studios announced plans for a $200 million studio complex near downtown St. Mary's. As the professional, technical, and physical infrastructure becomes even more fully developed, the economic benefits of each dollar spent on film and television production in Georgia will generate larger economic impacts for our state's economy.

Georgia's financial institutions are weathering the economic slowdown well, but as the economy slows, credit problems will worsen. We do not expect a tidal wave of bank failures like we experienced in the wake of the Great Recession, but banks with high exposure to commercial real estate loans or with large holdings of commercial mortgage-backed securities bear watching. We expect that cuts in policy interest rates by the Federal Reserve will help the industry, Demographic trends such as above-average population growth will help Georgia's financial institutions, too. The end of the recent downcycle in single-family housing will help financial institutions. Plus, it is very reassuring that almost all new mortgage loans are very well collateralized. Although homes are moderately overvalued, we expect home prices to increase slightly or hold steady. It is unlikely that many people owe more on their mortgages than their homes are worth.

In 2025, deposits will continue to migrate from banks to higher yielding alternatives, but the migration rate will slow as policy interest rates fall. For about two years, an inverted or flat yield curve has been limiting financial institutions' ability to profit from borrowing short and lending long. We expect long-term yields to rise above short-term yields by mid-2025, which will eliminate the yield curve inversion. That bodes well for banks.

The downturn in commercial real estate markets – especially severe in the metros with highest vacancy rates – constitutes the main threat to the banking industry. A fatal combination of high interest rates and high vacancy rates will continue to bring down commercial real estate prices and the value of commercial mortgage-backed securities. Meanwhile, outflows of inexpensive deposits have reduced banks' ability to hold onto these distressed assets, but we expect those outflows to shrink in 2025. Nonetheless, a few regional and community banks may fail, or be forced to merge with stronger institutions.

In 2025, slower growth in demand for many types of loans and higher losses on loans will limit Georgia banks' profits. Households' credit scores are at decent levels, but credit scores will deteriorate as the economy slows. Nonetheless, we expect higher consumer spending will support some growth of non-revolving credit to households. Banks tightened lending standards in both 2023 and 2024, but we do not expect banks to tighten much more in 2025. More auto loans will add to the bottom line. In addition, an increase in mortgage refinancing, albeit from a very depressed level, will help the bottom line.

Georgia's leisure and hospitality industry is a high contact industry and therefore was hit extremely hard by the COVID-19 pandemic and initially was slow to recover. In 2022, lodging demand rose substantially and Georgia's hospitality industry fully recovered from the pandemic recession. In 2023-24, visitation rose to record levels, generating record levels of direct and total economic impacts. Georgia ranks fifth among the states in terms of its market share for domestic visitors. In 2025, Georgia's leisure and hospitality industry will continue to expand, but at a slower pace than in 2023-24, reflecting slowdowns of the state, national, and global economies.

The prospects are different for various segments of Georgia's hospitality industry. First, leisure travel will continue to outperform business travel. Second, domestic travel will outperform international travel. That observation applies to both leisure and business travel. Third, prospects for the lodging industry vary by property type. Due to the economic slowdown, economy and midscale properties will fare best. Upscale and luxury properties catering to group/convention travelers, inbound international travelers, and fly-to leisure/business travelers will fare worst. Full recovery for such properties took longer than initially expected due to structural changes such as the widespread substitution of videoconferencing for in-person events. Such changes will be an enduring headwind for Georgia's tourism industry.

Prospects for Manufacturing

Manufacturing is cyclically sensitive and depends heavily on complex supply chains and export markets. We expect production by Georgia's manufacturers to grow faster than production by US manufacturers. The main reason Georgia's manufacturing sector will outperform the nation's manufacturing sector is that Georgia saw many manufacturing economic development projects announced in 2020-24. Those projects – as well as some announced in prior years – will continue to build out and become operational, contributing to the increase in industrial production we expect for Georgia. We expect supply chain problems to diminish, which will support both Georgia and US manufacturing. Due to recent shortages of critical inputs and other supply chain problems there is a need to produce more in some product categories. We expect the number of manufacturing jobs in Georgia to increase in 2025.

Georgia's largest manufacturing industry is food processing, which adds value to Georgia large production agricultural economy. Indeed, Business Facilities magazine ranks Georgia eighth as a leading state in food processing. In 2025, we expect the food processing industry to do well. Many of the economic development projects announced over the last few years were food processors. Agribusiness and food processing projects announced in 2020-24 include Walmart's dairy facility in Valdosta, Lee Kum Kee Sauce Group, FreshRealm, Yakult, 4 Fungi's Regenerative, CJ Foodville, PepsiCo Beverages, Jack Link's, AFB International, MANA Nutrition, American Peanut Growers Group, King's Hawaiian, Bimbo QSR, Nestle Purina, Anheuser-Busch, BANG ENERGY, Sugar Bowl Bakery, Kerry Group, Batter Up Foods, Frito Lay, Coffee Cake Bakery and General Mills.

In 2025, Georgia's vehicle and vehicle parts manufacturing industries will benefit from higher domestic demand for vehicles. In addition, supply chain problems are expected to diminish, which will enable the industry to increase production to meet consumers' pent-up demand more fully for vehicles. In 2024, the average age of a vehicle in the US rose to 12.6 years, which is a record high. That bodes well for vehicle sales in 2025. Political pressures that encourage foreign manufacturers to invest more in US production facilities and to buy automotive parts from US manufacturers will help. In addition, there are more assembly plants in the Southeast in the wake of the COVID-19 recession.

Georgia is developing as nexus of the electric vehicle manufacturing industry. Hyundai Motor Group and LG Energy Solutions' 2022 decision to invest over $5.5 billion in Bryan County at their first fully dedicated electric vehicle and battery manufacturing facility will create 8,100 jobs. In 2023, Hyundai Motor Group and LG Energy Solutions doubled down on that decision and announced plan to invest an additional $2 billion. In total, the $7.6 billion joint venture, dubbed the Hyundai Motor Group Metaplant (HMGMA) will create 8,500 jobs over the next eight years and will be able to support the production of 300,000 electric vehicles annually. Operations at the electric vehicle/battery manufacturing joint venture in Bryan County are expected to begin in 2025. The IONIQ 5 will be the first model built at the HMGMA. The Georgia Department of Economic Development is focused on creating an ecosystem that supports the entire electric vehicle supply chain.

Vehicle parts manufacturing projects announced will bolster growth in Georgia's vehicle and vehicle parts manufacturing industry. Projects announced in 2023-24 include Doowon Climate Control America, Syensqo, GF Casting Solutions, Ecoplastis Corporation, SK Battery America, Sewon America, Seohan Auto Georgia, Hanon Systems, PHA, GRUDEM, Woory Industrial, NVH Korea, Kia, Hyumdai Motor Group, LG Energy Solutions, DAS Corp., Daechang Seat Corp. USA, F&P Georgia, Hwashin, Hyundai Industrial, and Toyota Industries Corporation.

Effective economic development policies as well as rising wages and production costs in China – and other overseas locations – are factors that support Georgia's manufacturing sector. Concerns about trade policies, product quality and management of the risks associated with increasingly complex – time-sensitive – supply chains also make manufacturing in Georgia more attractive than manufacturing overseas. Additional factors that will help Georgia attract manufacturers include a superior transportation, logistics, and distribution infrastructure, low costs of doing business relative to other advanced economies, a favorable tax structure, highly ranked colleges & universities, excellent work-force training programs such as Quick Start, and extremely competitive economic development incentives.

Prospects for State and Local Government

In 2022-24, higher revenue collections and federal largess reversed the downturn in state and local government jobs. The upturn in hiring by government was much delayed compared to hiring in the private sector of the economy. In addition, the upturn was not vigorous because it was well understood that stimulus funds received by state and local governments from the federal government were unlikely to repeat. Surpluses therefore were better used to cover one-time or temporary expenditures instead of new programs or new hires. Nonetheless, state and local governments contributed to 2022-24 employment growth and will do so again in 2025. Although the economic slowdown will slow growth in state and local government revenue collections, inflation will help prevent revenues from declining. Indeed, local governments' revenue collections will increase strongly due to the lagged effects of the recent housing boom on property tax digests.

In most jurisdictions, local government will boost hiring faster than state government. That is because compared to state government, local governments depend more heavily on property taxes and fees for services and less heavily on sales and income taxes. Revenues generated by property taxes and fees typically are far less cyclical than revenues generated by sales and income taxes. Due to the post pandemic-recession housing boom, most local governments will generate revenue sufficient to sustain and expand programs. While we do not expect residential real estate prices to increase very much in 2025, but it is highly likely that assessed residential property values will rise more substantially because assessed values lag market prices by a year or more. In 2020-24, there was heavy spending for major home improvement projects (e.g., swimming pools) that will add to residential property tax digests. In addition, new single-family home construction will be on the upswing, which will lead to the expansion of property tax bases.

Economic Development

Georgia economic development prowess will be a powerful driver of economic growth. In 2023, 2022, and 2021, Georgia's economic developers shattered annual economic development records. In 2024, the number of projects increased slightly, but investment dollars decreased to $20 billion from $23 billion in 2023. Due to the US and global economic slowdowns, we expect economic development activity to slow in 2025, but Georgia will win a larger share of the economic development projects in contention. Georgia's economic development aptitude reflects many factors that make Georgia a great place in which to do business. Georgia fields an extremely competitive team of economic development professionals who produced outstanding results.

Georgia ranks high with respect to its customized workforce development efforts. For example, Quick Start, is offered by Georgia's Technical College System and has been ranked by economic developers as the nation's best workforce development programs for fourteen consecutive years. In addition, Georgia established HOPE Career Grant areas of study to better align college students' fields of study with companies' workforce needs. Those factors plus Georgia's major transportation and logistical advantages and a competitive tax climate help to refill Georgia's economic development pipeline. The build out of specialized job training centers – BioScience Training Center and Georgia Cyber Center – is a highly effective way to attract and retain businesses that require workers with highly specialized skills. Similarly, the creation of an Aviation Academy in Paulding County will support the aerospace industry's growth. For these and other reasons, in 2024, site consultants ranked Georgia the top state in which to do business for the tenth straight year. The bottom line is that Georgia outcompetes other states for new projects and expansions.

As noted above, national, state, and regional economies will continue to slow and that will make it more difficult for Georgia to capitalize on its many advantages. That is because the number of expansion and relocation projects that US states are competing for will decrease, reducing Georgia's prospects for new landing economic development projects that expand the economic base. Georgia's overall share of the smaller number of projects that states are vying for is likely to increase, however. Economic development therefore will continue to provide a larger push to Georgia's economy than to the national economy.

Because it often takes many years to build out the typical economic development project, many projects announced over the last several years will provide a substantial push to Georgia's economic growth in 2025. Large economic development projects announced in 2024 include: (1) PrizePicks, a fantasy sports company, announced that it will locate its corporate headquarters in Atlanta, creating 1,000 new jobs over the next seven years. (2) SOLARCYCLE will create over 600 jobs at a solar glass manufacturing facility in Cedartown. (3) First Quality Baby Products will expand its manufacturing base in Macon, creating 600 new jobs. (4) Gerresheimer will expand its medical manufacturing operations in Peachtree City, creating over 400 jobs. (5) Cargill, a global food and agriculture business, will establish a massive office operation in Atlanta, creating over 400 jobs. Large economic development projects announced in 2023 include: The decision by Qcells to build two new solar module manufacturing facilities in Georgia that will create more than 2,500 jobs in northwest Georgia. Life Sciences manufacturer Meissner's announcement that it will build a new facility in Athens that will create more than 1,700 jobs over the next eight years. ADMARES, a manufacturer of buildings, decision to build its first U.S. manufacturing facility in Waycross which will create over 1,400 jobs. The largest economic development projects announced in 2022 was Hyundai Motor Group decision to build its first fully dedicated electric vehicle and battery manufacturing facility in Bryan County, creating about 8,100 new jobs. This new electric vehicle plant is slated to open in 2025.

Due to cost, logistics, and tax advantages, Georgia is extremely competitive with other states when it comes to landing economic development projects. Many companies move to Georgia to cut costs. These advantages bore fruit in 2012-24. That is partially because Georgia made several strategic shifts in its economic development strategy, including a greater emphasis on workforce training as an economic development policy. Job training programs and new highly specialized workforce training centers will increase the supply of highly skilled workers thereby attracting businesses with high-paying jobs. Georgia's workforce centric approach towards economic development attracts business, raises workforce productivity, and boosts per capita incomes. The skills learned are portable, ensuring that the benefits of such incentives endure.

Legislation has made Georgia more competitive, but Georgia will have to be extremely aggressive in closing the right deals. Georgia should target industries that expand the economic base and have good potential for long-term growth, such as electric vehicle manufacturing. Georgia must invest strategically and grow clusters in areas ranging from biotechnology to advanced manufacturing. The focus should be on innovation-based companies. Of course, Georgia must also make sure that its statutory incentives remain competitive – the statutory incentives help to get Georgia short-listed by site selection professionals. Then, only after Georgia is short-listed, do those critical deal-closing incentives come into play.

A review of economic development announcements issued by the Office of the Governor and the Georgia Department of Economic Development indicates that economic developers are closing many deals in industries in which the state can produce at a low opportunity and marginal costs – comparative advantage. Specialization in activities where Georgia has comparative advantage bodes well for sustained success of the companies that received incentives thereby enhancing the prospect for long-term economic growth. Logistics, transportation, distribution, warehousing, electric vehicle manufacturing, software/technology, FinTech, data centers, cyber security, transactions processing, headquarters operations, floor coverings, building materials, automotive parts, food processing, and professional and business services are good examples of industries where Georgia competes effectively.

Housing Market Conditions

Housing is one of the most interest sensitive sectors of Georgia's economy. Shortly after the Federal Reserve pivoted from easy money to tight money mortgage rates doubled, which ended the post-pandemic housing boom. In 2022 and 2023, Georgia's single-family homebuilding industry was in recession. Higher mortgage rates were not the only factor behind the 2022-23 housing downturn. The sharp runup in home prices that began in mid-2020 was a second factor behind the housing recession. The combination of higher mortgage rates and the exceptionally large increases in home prices over a brief period reduced housing affordability. A third factor behind the housing downturn was a temporary loss of faith in the economic situation. Shortly after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, people became concerned about recession, especially as energy prices and inflation soared. People were less willing to commit to buying a home. These same factors reduced home builders' confidence in their ability to sell newly built homes whether under contract or built on speculation.

In 2025, sales of new and existing homes and permits to build new single-family homes will increase but permits to build new multi-family homes will decrease. The downturn in multi-unit construction reflects more difficulty obtaining financing as well as recent high deliveries of properties in the construction pipeline that raised vacancy rates and softened rents. Meanwhile, investors will be less active in Georgia's single- and multi-unit housing markets. Inventories of new and existing single-family homes for sale will rise – albeit from extremely low levels.

In 2025, single-family home prices will hold steady. That expectation may surprise many, but it is worth noting that historically single-family home prices are typically very sticky to the downside. The sharp price declines in the wake of the Great Recession were the exception and we believe are unlikely to be repeated in 2025. Indeed, the lack of homes for sale should prevent home prices from declining despite moderate overvaluation.

While homes are overvalued by traditional metrics, one reason we do not expect a repeat of the housing bust is that the fundamental supports for housing demand are stronger than prior to the Great Recession. In addition, current supplies of homes for sale and under construction will be limited, which is the opposite of the situation prior to the Great Recession. The more favorable balance of supply and demand suggests that housing markets will not crater and are likely to respond quickly as the Federal Reserve reduces policy interest rates. Housing is likely to expand in 2025. In the wake of the pandemic, the home is fundamentally more important to a larger proportion of the population. The economic slowdown will not change the higher regard people have towards home ownership.

We expect the number of single-family housing permits authorized to rise by 9 percent in 2025. The considerable number of new jobs created over 2021-24, strong population growth, excess savings, good household balance sheets, bigger paychecks, and slightly lower mortgage rates will support higher demand for new single-family homes. Limited supplies of existing homes for sale will increase demand for new homes. Builders will respond by building more single-family homes in 2025 than in 2024.

Single-family homebuilding will be an economic driver in 2025 and beyond. That is particularly important because Georgia gets a five for one from housing: (1) home builders and realtors benefit directly and (2) demand increases nationally for goods produced by Georgia's large floor covering, building materials, and forestry industries. Plus, (3) our large transportation and logistics industry benefits from higher levels of activity in construction – a very transportation intensive activity. In addition, (4) appreciating US home prices makes it even easier for companies and people to relocate to Georgia. This was a factor behind the recent surge in net domestic migration to Georgia. Finally, (5) the home equity generated via recent home price appreciation boosts small business formation and expansion as well as consumer spending.

We are pessimists with respect to the immediate prospects for multi-unit residential homebuilding. In Georgia, new multi-unit homebuilding will decrease by 8 percent in 2025. High deliveries of new units started over 2021-2022 will increase vacancy rates causing rents to decline. Tight lending standards for multi-unit projects as well as high financing costs will be major problems, too.

Home Prices

As of mid-2024, Georgia's existing home prices were 65 percent higher than prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The year-over-year gain was 6 percent. We do not expect home prices to rise much higher in 2025. Recent home price increases and high mortgage rates have reduced affordability enough to limit additional home price gains. Also, by traditional metrics homes are already overvalued. Nonetheless, we do not expect home prices to decline. Instead, home prices will either increase slightly or hold steady.

Beyond 2025, there is tremendous potential for much more active housing. Georgia's population growth is strong. In addition, many young people are still living at home, or are doubled up with roommates rather than living in their own apartments or homes. Faster economic growth, lower mortgage rates, and larger supplies of homes that are for sale, in combination with a strong preference for detached housing will cause more of that potential to be unleashed.

Demographics

Demographic forces are another factor behind Georgia's above-average economic performance and comparative good prospects. Census data shows that Georgia's population surged in 2022, growing by 1.1 percent, or almost three times faster than the US population. In 2023, Georgia's population also grew by about 1.1 percent. The 2022-23 surge was likely due to changes brought by the pandemic such as the increased acceptance of remote work and a desire to live in less densely settled locations. The 2022-23 pace of population growth is not sustainable, but we are confident that above-average population growth will be sustained. In 2024-25, Georgia's population will grow at an annual pace that is more than double the national average – 0.7 percent for Georgia versus 0.3 percent for the US. Census data show that Georgia is an attractive destination for mid-career movers. Georgia also performs well when it comes to attracting top-career movers and retirees. According to United Van Lines, the primary reason people move to Georgia is a job, followed by family connections, lifestyle choices, retirement, and a lower cost of living.

In 2025, domestic net migration will be higher than in 2020-21 and higher than prior to the pandemic, but lower than in 2022-23. Prior to the pandemic net migration to Georgia was about 40,000 per year. Domestic net migration will be about 40,000 in 2025 compared to about 45,000 in 2024 and 58,000 in

2023. Since we expect Georgia's economy to outperform the average state's economy, net migration to Georgia will drop only slightly in 2025. One reason the drop in net migration to Georgia will be small is that unemployment rates will be on the increase in most states – including Georgia, but Georgia's unemployment rate will remain below the unemployment rates in many of the states that typically send people to Georgia. People and businesses will be looking to move to states where economic performance is comparatively good. In addition, changes due to greater acceptance of remote work will continue to favor Georgia as well as many other Sunbelt states as a place to live.

Prior to the pandemic, Georgia's above average rate of population growth depended on annual net international migration of about 20,000 people. Pandemic-related travel restrictions and pandemic-related reductions in the US government's capacity to process visas reduced that number to only 730 in 2020. The number of net annual international migrants rose to 10,161 in 2021, to 27,010 in 2022, and to 30,119 in 2023. We estimate that the 2022-23 surge in net international migration dropped to between 20,000 and 25,000 in 2024 will drop to under 10,000 in 2025. In addition, Georgia's population growth should benefit from a slight increase in number of births, but the fertility rate will remain below where it stood in prior decades.

Put it all together and above-average population growth will be a powerful driver of Georgia's GDP in 2025. Indeed, looking beyond the economic slowdown, labor markets are likely to be much tighter over the next couple of decades than in the decades that preceded the pandemic. Above-average population growth conveys above-average labor force growth, which will keep Georgia's potential rate of economic growth above that of US. Strong demographics will ensure that Georgia's economy continues to outperform the US economy for many years. Stricter US immigration policies are a major downside risk to Georgia's labor force and population growth, especially for 2026 and beyond.

GEORGIA BASELINE FORECAST, 2024-2025

Georgia	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Gross Domestic Product, Bil of 2017$	602.3	639.2	655.8	661.1	681.6	698.0
Percent change	-3.0	6.1	2.6	0.8	3.1	2.4
Nonfarm Employment (thousands)	4,425.1	4,598.1	4,810.3	4.904.7	4,977.6	5,027.5
Percent change	-4.5	3.9	4.6	2.0	1.5	1.0
Personal Income, Bil of $	552.2	606.1	617.6	646.1	677.8	709.6
Percent change	6.9	9.8	1.9	4.6	4.9	4.7
Housing Permits, Total	55,827	67,223	77,752	63,621	67,280	70,428
Percent change	3.7	20.4	15.7	-18.2	5.8	4.7
Unemployment Rate (percent)	6.5	3.9	3.1	3.2	3.7	4.0

Source: The Selig Center for Economic Growth, Terry College of Business, The University of Georgia.

The Savannah Outlook: 2025

Michael J. Toma
Fuller E. Callaway Professor of Economics
Parker College of Business, Georgia Southern University

Eboni Houston, Research Assistant, Georgia Southern University

In 2024, the Savannah regional economy was substantially boosted by extensive growth and development in the manufacturing sector, and conditions are set for continued expansion in 2025. Long gone is the stressed economy of the pandemic recession. Regional employment exceeds its pre-pandemic high by 8% while gross regional product (regional GDP) increased 19% from 2020 to 2023.

In 2025, baseline growth in the regional economy will be powered by continuing strength in manufacturing, logistics and distribution, port activity, and real estate development. Employment growth in 2025 is projected to be 2% with firms adding about 4,000 jobs during the year.

The diversification of the regional economy is provided by the strength of its underlying economic drivers that are (in no particular order) manufacturing, port operations and logistics, tourism, health care, military activity, and real estate development. Each of these facets of the regional economy will be discussed after the presentation of a general economic forecast for the region in 2025.

General Conditions and 2025 Forecast

The Department of Economics, in association with the Center for Business Analytics and Economic Research (CBAER), in the Office of Research at Georgia Southern University produces the quarterly publication, *Economic Monitor*, that analyzes current economic conditions in the Savannah MSA (Chatham, Bryan, and Effingham counties), and presents short term forecasts for the area (email: mtoma@georgiasouthern.edu). The GSU Economics Department in the Parker College of Business produces a leading (forecasting) index and a coincident index of regional economic activity in the Savannah metro area, collectively known as the Savannah Metro Business indexes.

The coincident index of economic and business activity is designed to measure the regional economic “heartbeat” based on factors characterizing the underlying foundational components of the Savannah metro area economy. Through the third quarter of 2024, over-the-year growth in the regional economy as measured by the coincident index was 2.2%. Further upside growth was limited by hurricanes which passed nearby or through point-of-origin markets for Savannah’s tourism industry.

A primary economic coincident factor of the Savannah Business Index is nonagricultural employment in the Savannah MSA. Through the third quarter of 2024, total employment was 207,800. This represents growth of 2.2%, translating into 4,500 additional jobs in the region. Private sector employers added 3,400 workers (+1.8%) while 1,100 public sector jobs were added in the region.

In goods producing sectors (manufacturing and construction), employment increased about 1,000 workers (+2.8%). On the strength of growth in the manufacture of transportation equipment (automobiles and aircraft), overall manufacturing employment increased by 600 jobs (+2.6%), while construction employment increased by about 500 workers (+4.4%). Expectations are for substantial growth in 2025 as the regional automotive industry ecosystem continues ramping up through the year.

Service producing sectors added 3,600 workers (+2.1%). Service sector growth was strongest in education and health services (+1,200 jobs, +4.1%), local government (+800 jobs, +4.9%), and in the hospitality sector (+400 jobs, +1.6%). Business and professional services employment was nearly steady following a two-year draw-down period as workers with temporary employment agencies migrated into full-time positions in the region.

Among the remaining coincident indicators, GPA container handling in port facilities increased 13% and is back on its long-term trend rate of growth, tourism visitation to the region recorded modest growth, while boardings at the airport increased 5.5%. Retail sales registered growth of 1%.

2025 Savannah Regional Outlook

The Savannah Metro Business forecasting index is designed to anticipate regional economic activity during the upcoming nine-month period. The forecasting index primarily is developed from indicators characterizing the regional housing and labor markets but includes forecasting elements characterizing broader regional and national economic factors.

The forecasting index is up 4.3% over-the-year through the third quarter of 2024. This follows lackluster behavior in 2023 attributed to volatility in the housing market in 2023 associated with the substantial uptick in mortgage interest rates. Housing market volatility is subsiding as buyers adjust to the new norm of higher interest rates that did subsequently back off one point from the peak in 2023 of 7.6%. Issuance of building permits for single family homes increased 10.3% (as of 2024, Q3) on an over-the-year basis. Further, the average value of a building permit issued is up 4% as compared to six months prior in 2024 Q1.

Regionally, the labor market remains very tight with low unemployment. Initial claims for unemployment insurance (UI) are down 8.1% (as compared to 2023 Q3). The regional unemployment rate modestly increased to 3.3% from 3% in 2023. After adjusting for inflation, wage growth was 2.4% in 2024, indicating increased purchasing power for workers and their families in the region. This is a welcome change after weakness in wage growth and purchasing power during the period of elevated inflation during 2023. Expectations for 2025 wage growth are 2.5% to 2.75% as additional higher paying jobs in manufacturing are filled as robust growth in the regional automotive industry continues.

In 2025, employment in the Savannah metro area is expected to increase 2%, or about 4,000 jobs. Regional employment growth in 2025 will be governed by manufacturing and logistics hiring along with support from health services, construction, and the hospitality sector.

The projected annual unemployment rate for 2025 is 3.5%, up slightly from 2024. Unemployment rates will be held lower than normal by re-absorption of workers into what will be a very tight labor market again in 2025. The anticipated slowdown in Georgia and national economic growth will manifest in the Savannah metro area in a marginally higher unemployment rate.

Turning to population growth, the region's long-run attractiveness as a place to live, work, and retire remains unaffected by short-run business cycles. Population growth in 2025 is again expected to be above average, driven by general in-migration but also that associated with employment opportunities in the growing regional automotive industry. For 2025, population growth is expected to be 1.8%, about two-tenths of a percent above the long-term pace of growth since 2000. Population growth in Bryan and Effingham Counties combined is expected to be about 3.3%, continuing the trend of more rapid growth in counties adjacent to the economic core in Chatham County. Bryan County has been the sixth fastest growing county in the state since 2020.

In 2024, economic growth in the Savannah metro region was slightly below the trend pace since 2010 and this is expected to continue into 2025. Moderate growth of 2% in the employment base is expected to be underpinned by strong hiring in manufacturing and with lesser growth in logistics, leisure/hospitality, and health services. Port-related real estate development and residential development will continue on the pace established in 2024 as market expectations re-set to normalized mortgage rates. Overall, the pace of growth in 2025 is expected to be sustainable throughout the year even as the US and Georgia economies weaken.

Economic Foundations

The remainder of the forecast considers expected activity in the six major underlying economic foundations of the Savannah MSA economy. Recall that these drivers are (in no particular order) manufacturing, the port and logistics, tourism, health care, the military, and real estate development.

Manufacturing

There is a divergence between headcount "covered" employment and "payroll" employment (by place of work) for the manufacturing sector in the Savannah MSA. The far more accurate, but less timely, headcount of manufacturing employment increased 2,300 workers through the second quarter of 2024 as compared to previous year. This is an 11% increase and follows the 13% increase of the previous year. All told, since the May 2022 Hyundai Metaplant announcement, the regional manufacturing base has increased 25% to 23,600 workers. As a result, an additional $200 million in worker compensation is flowing through the regional economy. Over 83% of the manufacturing growth has been at employers in the transportation equipment sector, in other words, at Gulfstream, at the Hyundai Metaplant, and at supply chain firms for the Metaplant.

It is incidentally noted that "payroll" employment growth in the regional manufacturing base for all of 2024 indicates a gain of about 600 workers (+2.6%). This starkly illustrates the limitations of the "payroll" data survey methodology as compared to the actual comprehensive headcount of workers. The survey methodology generally fails to capture inflection points (substantial deviations from trend, up or down) in the actual data because of the data lags built into the methodology. When changes in trends are minimal, the two employment figures converge, but when notable trend changes occur (Hyundai and Gulfstream growth), the two data programs measuring employment diverge. Subsequent benchmark revision of the less accurate "payroll" data occurs in the Spring of each year when the headcount "covered" employment data for the full previous year becomes available.

A review of recent activity and announcements from headlining companies in the sector points toward another strong year for manufacturing in 2025.

The Savannah Harbor-Interstate Corridor Joint Development Authority (Savannah JDA) consisting of Bryan, Bulloch, Chatham and Effingham counties continued to work with Hyundai Motor Group Metaplant America (HMGMA) to finalize the development of the Bryan County Megasite, the home of HMGMA. Hyundai Motor Group along with LG Energy Solution have announced a total of 8,500 new jobs and $7.59 billion in capital investment at the Metaplant. The Hyundai Metaplant is the first fully-dedicated electric vehicle manufacturing facility in the state and the largest economic development project in Georgia history.

Not even two years after breaking ground and ahead of their projected schedule, HMGMA officially began production during October of 2024 thanks in part to the Savannah JDA's timely site preparation of the Bryan County Megasite. The first electric vehicle to roll off the assembly line was an IONIQ 5, one of several models of Hyundai, Genesis and Kia vehicles that will be produced at the Bryan County facility. An official grand-opening celebration is scheduled during the first quarter of 2025.

More than 1,100 employees have already been hired at the plant as "meta-pros" with a large majority being hired from within a 60-mile radius. Additionally, HMGMA, in cooperation with Glovis America, announced it will initially deploy 21 Hyundai XCIENT heavy-duty hydrogen fuel-cell electric trucks for clean logistics operations.

Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation is the largest private employer in Savannah with a global workforce of 19,000+ workers in production, service, maintenance, engineering, and research and development. Gulfstream aircraft attained new milestones in 2024. The company was awarded a $991 million contract to offer logistics support services to its special missions aircraft in service with the US Ari Force, Navy, Marine Corps, Army and Coast Guard. Gulfstream completed a $150 million expanded customer service support center at the Savannah/Hilton Head Airport that officially opened July 2024, creating over 200 new jobs and the expansion of the maintenance, repair, and overhaul facility capabilities. The expansion increases the footprint of the service center to 1.1 million square feet with the capacity to concurrently accommodate more the 85 aircraft in ten hangars.

Gulfstream continues development of its fleet of aircraft. The first fully outfitted G800 flight took place in 2024 and is completing the testing procedures for the cabin interior and aircraft performance of the industry's longest range business-class jet. Initial deliveries of the G700 began in April 2024 after FAA certification and the aircraft recently set 65 city-pair speed records for the quickest travel times between pairs of cities. Further, the G700 received European Union Aviation Safety Agency certifications, creating opportunities for future international deliveries. The G650 and G650ER each surpassed 1 million flight hours for the aircraft that entered service in 2012 and 2014, respectively. The G500 and G600 aircraft each surpassed 100,000 flight hours, thus simultaneously demonstrating high global demand and the durability and dependability of the aircraft. Gulfstream completed the first successful flight of the new G400, thus launching the flight test program for the aircraft.

JCB's North American headquarters, centered in Savannah, is a 500,000-square-foot facility to support a network of over 115 dealers in the U.S. and Canada. In March of 2024, JCB was awarded a $39 million contract with the United States Marines Corps to deliver 206 units of the 3TS-8T Teleskid, a skid-steer and compact truck loader designed and manufactured in Savannah. In October 2024, the global headquarters announced JCB had produced its one millionth engine since commencing operations in the U.K in 2004.

The Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA) had yet another successful year in 2024 as they continued to work with regional partners to attract new jobs opportunities and investment to Chatham County. SEDA announced six new companies in 2024 including Mana Nutrition, Armstrong Logistics, F. List GmBH, GigaCloud Technology, RCO Aerospace and Win.IT America. Savannah also saw growth from existing industries such as NGL Transportation and DSI. SEDA also helped accelerate three Tier

1 tenants in the Savannah Chatham Manufacturing Center from pad construction to certificate of occupancy to meet the aggressive production goals of HMGMA. SEDA was awarded the 2024 McKinley "Mac" Conway Award for Excellence in Economic Development for the sixth year in a row by Site Selection magazine.

2024 kicked off with the announcement of the Regional Industry Support Enterprise (RISE), a new regional workforce coalition that SEDA was proud to create. Since its development, the RISE team has secured funding commitments from eight counties to partner with RISE starting in 2025 including Bryan, Bulloch, Candler, Chatham, Effingham, Evans, Liberty and Screven Counties. Additionally, the RISE name and brand have been developed, established and shared through more than 90 presentations to organizations and individuals in the region and state. Working groups for each RISE initiative were developed and managed, employer forums were developed and enhanced throughout the region in partnership with local development authorities and the team planned and executed a trip for approximately 30 regional partners on a best practices summit in Bowling Green, Kentucky. A Board of Directors was formed for the new organization's operating entity. The RISE team planned and executed two hiring forums related to individuals under 18 and second-chance workers, as well as hosted a military hiring event for exiting service members, spouses, dependents and veterans.

World Trade Center Savannah successfully hosted 10 Global Education Programs with a total of 800 attendees in 2024. The World Trade Center Savannah team returned to Ireland in August 2024 accompanied by leadership from the Georgia Department of Economic Development, the Metro Atlanta Chamber and Georgia Southern University, where the group met with Irish businesses and civic leaders in Wexford, Limerick, and Dublin, including strategic meetings with World Trade Center Dublin, to further advance the TradeBridge program and its mission through civic, tourism, education and economic development efforts. World Trade Center Savannah proudly hosted the King and Queen of the Netherlands during their visit to Savannah, playing a crucial role in developing and executing the programming during their visit to the U.S.

World Trade Center Savannah also led its first trade mission to India where it was named the recipient of the World Trade Centers Association North America Regional Member of the Year Award and the Champion Award for Reciprocity and Network Support during the 54th Global Business Forum. 2024 brought 19 inbound delegations from countries including the Netherlands, United Kingdom, Vietnam, Germany, Canada, Australia and Ireland. Throughout 2024, World Trade Center Savannah made significant strides in fostering business and cultural relations with Ghana. This initiative peaked with the historic city-to-city signing ceremony between Accra, Ghana, and Savannah in the spring, formalizing the partnership that the two regions share.

Moving forward into 2025, SEDA will continue to serve the region by marketing the Savannah region to attract industries and serve existing industries. SEDA will continue to focus on addressing workforce needs as identified by the 2023 workforce study released by the Savannah JDA and expects to release a housing study in Q1 of 2025.

In Bryan County, headlining activity, mentioned above, continues to be development associated with the Hyundai Motor Group Metaplant America electric vehicle manufacturing facility. HMGMA increased employment by about 800 workers to a total of just over 1,100 from 2023 to 2024. Continued employment growth is anticipated in 2025 as production continues the ramping up process. The first Ionic 5 SUV rolled off the assembly line in the fall of 2024 and the first of the all-new Ionic 9 three-row SUV will begin production in early 2025. The Metaplant is the only facility in North America to build the Ionic 9 vehicle.

Bulloch County's 55 manufacturing establishments employed 2,200 workers as of mid-2024. Five industrial projects announced for Bulloch County since 2022 will continue to enhance the manufacturing base well into 2025 and beyond. Overall, the announcements represent over 1,600 jobs and $1.1 billion in private investment. Four companies (Joon Georgia, Hanon Systems, Ecoplastic, and Aspen Aerogels) in the supply chain for the Hyundai Metaplant comprise the large majority of new jobs and announced investment.

Effingham County's manufacturing sector also saw strong gains in 2024, with nine new manufacturers commencing operation and employment increasing by 18% to over 2,700 workers. This upward trend is expected to persist, bolstered by the continued ramp-up of Sewon America, a Tier 1 Hyundai supplier. Currently employing 300 workers, Sewon America is on track to grow to 740 employees by 2029, solidifying its role as a major employer and economic driver for the county.

While new project inquiries in Effingham slowed in 2024 following the completion of the Hyundai Metaplant and Tier 1 supplier facilities, the decline aligns with the exceptional surge of activity seen in 2023. Manufacturing inquiries unrelated to the Metaplant have remained steady, indicating sustained interest in Effingham County's competitive industrial landscape.

Liberty County manufacturers employed about 2,280 workers in 2024, a 4.2% gain over 2023. The highlight of industrial development in the county during the year was the completion of Seohan Auto Georgia's manufacturing plant in Tradeport East. The South Korean-based company builds brake and tie-rod parts for automobiles and is a Tier One vendor to Hyundai's nearby EV Metaplant in Bryan County. Seohan started operations in November and had 44 employees in December. It expects to have more than 180 employees when in full operation. In Midway Industrial Park, Builders FirstSource added approximately 30,000 SF to its existing manufacturing space, where the company assembles building trusses. The county's largest employer, SNF Corporation, employs approximately 1,700 persons and is the second largest manufacturing employer in the seven-county Savannah combined statistical area.

Another important development for Liberty County industry is the completion of buildings in Dorchester Commerce Center just outside Tradeport East. Flint Development of Kansas City completed two of the three buildings planned for the industrial park in 2024. The new buildings cover 276,000 SF and 594,500 SF and are being marketed. The third building, with 1,200,000 SF, is expected for delivery in early 2025. Further, other activity bodes well for the future of industrial development in the county. In early December 2024 state officials awarded a $2 million grant to the Liberty County Development Authority to help fund construction of roadway infrastructure into Tradeport West Business Center south of Midway. The road and drainage infrastructure will enhance the attractiveness to prospective industries considering the 170-acre site which is ready for development. The remodeling of two vacant industrial buildings in Hinesville Technology Park is also nearing completion. The buildings have attracted attention from prospects and occupants are expected soon.

Georgia Ports Authority

The Georgia Ports Authority operates the largest single-terminal container facility in North America. The Port of Savannah is the third-busiest port in the country for container trade and has the largest capacity for container handling in the Western Hemisphere. Georgia's logistics ecosystem provides the environment for GPA's and Georgia's economic success on a worldwide basis. By facilitating global trade, GPA enables international business to thrive in Georgia. The state's political and business leadership view GPA facilities as a state-level asset, one which yielded a contribution of $59 billion to state GDP, $3.8 billion in state and local taxes, $140 billion in revenue to Georgia's economy, and supported 561,000 jobs.

In FY 2024 the Port of Savannah handled a record 5.25 million TEUs (twenty-foot equivalent units). Although this was a decrease of 2.3% when compared to the previous year, the decrease represents a normalization of activity toward the more sustainable long-term trend rate of growth. The Port of Savannah moved over 22% of the East Coast container trade, handling 11.6% of all U.S. containerized exports.

Tourism

The leisure and hospitality sector, which includes accommodations, food services, arts, entertainment, and recreation, is a top-four fastest growing (2.3% annually) sector since the Great Recession low in early 2010. The sector provides employment for nearly 27,600 workers, making it the second largest employment sector in the regional economy.

The sector's forecast is encouraging for 2025 and in the longer term as new product is added at both the western and eastern end of the Savannah riverfront district. Further deepening of the higher-end market for visitors continues with the delivery of upscale accommodations and dining expected for 2025 and 2026. The $500 million Plant Riverside District project is completed and "River Street East," a $350 million development, is adding three hotels with 480 rooms and a seven-story parking garage. Plans for a full-service Hilton Hotel were approved in 2024 that will include a central plaza anchoring leisure, dining and entertainment. These additions are scheduled to open through 2025 and into 2026.

New upscale hotel developments entered the market in 2024 and will continue in 2025. The "Savannah Skyscraper," a 15-story building in Johnson Square, is being converted into a Ritz Carlton by TMGOC Ventures. It will have 160 rooms and construction is expected to start in early 2025. Additionally, the Manger Building is being converted to a 230-room, 5-star hotel by Left Lane Hospitality. The two-year conversion process is continuing through 2025 and is expected to allow opening in 2026. Left Lane delivered the renovated, upgraded and re-imagined Hotel Bardo (formerly The Mansion) on Forsyth Park.

Additional new and renovated tourism product will be financed during the next five years by an increase in Savannah's hotel/motel tax by two percentage points to 8%. Of the new revenue raised by the tax, 14.7% will finance projected investment of $85.5 million through 2028, with planned capital expenses on tourism products by the city totaling $12.6 million in FY 2025 and almost $20 million in FY 2026. Of the $85 million total, $30 million is scheduled for redevelopment of the Savannah Waterfront, $20 million for the Waterworks building near Enmarket Arena, and $10 million for the Tide-to-Town trail system.

Health Services

The regional health care sector continues to be a stalwart of economic consistency and growth since 2007. This sector is resistant to cyclical downturns and experienced fewer job losses during both the pandemic recession and the Great Recession (2007-09). As of the second quarter of 2024, annual employment growth was 3.3% increasing the number of jobs to 28,200 in the seven-county combined statistical area centered on Savannah. As a regional healthcare delivery center, the health sector continues to be a vital component of the area's economy and growth prospects are good in the short and long run.

The two nationally recognized medical centers in Savannah, St. Joseph's/Candler (SJC) and Hospital Corporation of America's (HCA) Memorial University Medical Center serve the healthcare needs of people from across Georgia's southeastern region.

The Medical College of Georgia opened a new four-year campus in Savannah at Georgia Southern University. The entire program can be completed at the Savannah campus and the first in-coming class numbers 41 students. The program is in collaboration with Georgia Southern University which is offering 23,000 square feet of instructional and lab space in two buildings on its Savannah campus. Student rotations in the SJC health system, first established in 2007, will continue and are facilitated by the close proximity of St. Joseph's Hospital to the MCG facility at Georgia Southern's Armstrong campus in Savannah.

SJC opened a new 15,000 square foot facility in Bryan County's Richmond Hill near the Heartwood community in February 2024, The initial $15.5 million investment is part of a master plan that ultimately could see 225,000 square feet of medical office space in up to 5 buildings as needed in conjunction with population growth in the south Bryan County area. Further, plans are in motion to provide additional medical services in a 10,000 square foot medical center near the Hyundai Metaplant in north Bryan County.

SJC has attained national recognition for its exceptional high-quality care provided to stroke patients. The hospital was awarded the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines® - Stroke GoldPlus quality achievement award for meeting the criteria of reducing disability and the time between a patients arrival at the facility and treatment.

Memorial Health has provided high-quality healthcare services since 1955, giving patients access to highly trained physicians and advanced technology. The flagship, Memorial Health University Medical Center, is a 711-bed teaching hospital and one of the region's leading acute care facilities, serving 35 counties in southeast Georgia and southern South Carolina. Located in Savannah, Georgia, Memorial Health is a regional referral center for heart care, cancer care, trauma care, children's care, high-risk pregnancies and high-risk newborn care. The hospital includes the region's only American College of Surgeons (ACS) verified Level 1 trauma center, DNV Healthcare certified comprehensive stroke center, and ACS Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery Accreditation and Quality Improvement Program accredited bariatric surgery program. Memorial Health is also home to the region's only children's hospital and Level III neonatal intensive care.

The healthcare system boasts a growing primary and specialty care physician network and Consult-A-Nurse®, a 24-hour call center. Memorial Health has a major medical education program that trains physicians in six residency programs and two fellowship programs. A four-year medical school, Mercer University School of Medicine – Savannah, is also located on the Memorial Health campus.

On February 1, 2018, Memorial Health joined HCA Healthcare, one of the nation's leading providers of healthcare services with more than 186 hospitals and 2,400+ sites of care in 20 states and in the United Kingdom. Since joining HCA Healthcare, Memorial Health has invested more than $325M in capital improvements, equipment and technology, paid more than $130M in taxes and donated more than $1.75M to local charitable organizations. Memorial Health employs more than 4,300 colleagues.

Memorial Health has an aggressive growth plan for our region. The hospital has applications with the Georgia Department of Community Health for two freestanding emergency rooms – one in Pooler and one in Richmond Hill. A $35M medical office building on the hospital campus is expected to be opened in January 2025. A new $28M medical office building in Pooler is under construction with plans to be completed in Fall 2025. This facility will include a new campus of the Galen College of Nursing.

Military

The Department of Defense, with Fort Stewart and Hunter Army Airfield, is the largest employer in Coastal Georgia. In 2024, there were approximately 29,200 military personnel and federal government workers in the Savannah combined statistical area. The regional economic footprint is substantial: total compensation for associated personnel and civilian workers is approximately $2.4 billion and the facilities combine for an annual economic impact of $5.8 billion.

Fort Stewart along with Hunter Army Airfield serves as the Army's premier power projection platform on the East Coast. Over the past two years, the 3rd Infantry Division has been undergoing a modernization program to become the most powerful division in the U.S. Army.

The 3rd Infantry Division was deployed to northeastern Europe for nine months to engage in multi-national training with nine other brigades from twelve NATO countries. They worked alongside NATO allies and regional security partners to provide combat ready forces to V-Corps, America's forward-deployed corps in Europe, before returning in May 2024.

The Division's 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team's 3,500 troops completed a 14-day rotation at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, California to prepare for deployment to Europe early in 2025. The unit was also the first unit deployed to Europe in 2022 following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Soldiers with 5th Squadron, 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, conducted a rapid deployment readiness training exercise in July 2024. The purpose of the exercise is to create readiness to deploy anywhere in the world within 96 hours.

The Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport hosts the Savannah Air National Guard Base. The 165th Airlift Wing, 117th Air Control Squadron, and 156th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, based out of Charlotte, NC, operate from the airbase.

Real Estate: Residential and Commercial

Residential

The pressure on the residential real estate market eased modestly in 2024 as mortgage interest rates backed off their short-run cyclical high by about a full point as of late December 2024. However, the median price of a home, townhouse, and condo in Chatham County increased 6.3% to $340,100 in 2024. A total of 5,073 residential units (all types) sold, a decline of 8% as compared to 2023 and the third consecutive year of sales volume decline in the county.

The market share of units sold at greater than $300,000 increased to 63% from 57% in 2023. Conversely, the share of homes selling at or below $200,000 declined to 15% continuing a downward trend since 2018 at which time 51% of homes sold were in this range. The number of homes selling for over $1 million increased 50% to 329 units as compared to 2023. Limited supply of inventory pushed prices up significantly in 2023 and 2024 and is expected to be a factor again in 2025. Median sale price is expected to increase 4% to 6% in 2025 as income-attainable housing remain a challenge for many households in the region.

In the Savannah MSA, on the supply side of the housing market, the number of building permits issued in 2024 for single family homes was approximately 2,700 units (+4.6%), as compared to the five-year average of approximately 2,360 units. The average value of a permit issued decreased 1.7% to $253,200 in 2024. Residential construction is expected to moderately increase in 2025 as borrowers re-set their expectations to the normalized cost of borrowed funds. The number of permits issued is expected to increase by about 5% again in 2025.

Developers and homebuilders are responding to the increased demand for multifamily unit housing projects as evidenced by the near doubling of multifamily unit market share to 36% of total building permits issued in the past 6 years as compared to about 19% from 2010 to 2017. Numerous multifamily and single family housing developments have been under construction or approved in the Savannah metro area. These include projects in Savannah, Georgetown, Pooler, Port Wentworth, Bryan County, and Effingham County among others.

Office and Commercial

Vacancy rates in metro Savannah's office and commercial market increased modestly to 4.9% at the end of 2024 from 4.3% at the end of 2023. The amount of vacant space increased about 10% to 181,200 square feet from 165,000 square feet of the nearly 3.8 million square feet of inventory in the Savannah MSA. About 110,000 square feet of office space was withdrawn from the central business district in Johnson Square and re-positioned to other uses. Office absorption continues to move southward in the vicinity of Forsythe Park and into the midtown area.

Regionally, office market rental rates increased 7% to $26.93 per square foot while rental rates were up 8% to $31.92 per square foot in the downtown central business district. Rental rates had the largest upswing in the Westside market, increasing 9.2% to $24.92. Rental rates in the Midtown market also were above average for the metro area, increasing 8.4% to $25.67.

Retail trade continues to develop and evolve in the region. Downtown, commercial operations along Broughton Street remain healthy with low vacancy rates and little available space along with some turnover indicative of innovative evolution in specialty retail and food service offerings. The share of locally held and national chains remains at about a 50-50 mix. Further, commercial development continues to strengthen in the Starland District along Abercorn and Bull streets while development of a performance entertainment venue continues in 2025. At the eastern end of the riverfront district, the $600 million, 54-acre mixed-use Savannah River Landing project continues to unfold as the area emerges as a hub of restaurant, retail, and entertainment options.

In Pooler, development at the Mosaic Town Center, a 170-acre mixed-use development at I-16 and the Pooler Parkway, continued in 2024 with additional retail, service sector, and food service establishments coming online. The center is currently home to Costco and Expercare and will host the Galen College of Nursing in 2025. Further development of the center will be driven by population growth (as 1,200 apartments units are permitted for the interchange area) and infrastructure development in the immediate area.

In Port Wentworth in 2024, ground was broken on the 150-acre Anchor Park recreational and entertainment hub. In addition to hosting the training facility for the Savannah Ghost Pirates hockey team, the park will include a 5,500 seat amphitheater, food service options, and a golf-type entertainment venue. Recreational options include two ice rinks, soccer and football fields along with basketball, sand volleyball, and pickleball courts. A trail system and splash pad are included as well. The full project is expected for delivery in early 2026. In the upcoming years, the immediate area around the park is expected to evolve into a retail, restaurant, and entertainment hub in Port Wentworth.

Evolution of large-scale mall retailing center continues in 2025. Oglethorpe Mall operations remain healthy with full leasing activity. Redevelopment of the northwest quadrant, including the former Sears department store and auto service center, was well under way at the end of 2024 and multifamily units are expected to become available in 2025. Additional details for redevelopment of components of the southside's Savannah mall are expected in the coming year.

To the south in Bryan County at the Raydient development, commercial activity is emerging in 2025 with the opening of an early learning center, convenience store, and storage facility. Development at Heartwood will grow into a 25 acre hub of shopping, dining, and entertainment in the area. In late 2024 the Kessler Investments group announced plans for a major hotel and entertainment district in the Heartwood neighborhood that leverages the area's historical ties to Henry Ford. Additional details about the project are expected to be released in 2025.

Real Estate: Logistics and Distribution

The industrial and logistics market increased its footprint in the region by about 28 million square feet in 2024, increasing total inventory to 153.7 million square feet. About 15 million square feet were absorbed by manufacturing operations with much of the remaining floorspace delivered into logistics inventory. In the past two years, nearly 49 million square feet have entered the regional inventory and accordingly, vacancy rates have increased to 8.6% at the end of 2024 from less than 1% in 2022 and 2023. This is a familiar pattern for this type of development. Exceptionally low vacancy rates spur investment and the delivery of the additional inventory in large chunks which is subsequently absorbed by market demand. Vacancy rates are expected to decline after the first quarter of 2025.

Chatham County, in the 12-month period ending June 2024, added 111 firms in the logistics industry. In total, the 732 business establishments employ about 15,900 workers. 1,750 workers in the sector are Georgia Ports Authority employees and 2,200 International Longshoremen union members support port operations.

Effingham County's logistics and distribution sector experienced robust growth in 2024, driven by the expansion of existing facilities and the addition of six new companies in the prior year. Notably, new employers such as Aertssen Logistics, Sanritsu, and Kyungshin have contributed to this surge, increasing the number of establishments from 64 to 90 in one year and bringing the total logistics and distribution workforce to nearly 2,000—an impressive 55% increase over the previous year. In 2024, 1.56 million square feet of new distribution space was delivered, supporting the sector's continued expansion and growth.

Bryan County registered substantial growth in the logistics sector in 2024. The number of establishments increased to 48 from 35 in 2023 and employment in the sector doubled to 1,185 workers from 592 in 2023. About 3 million square feet of industrial and logistics product were delivered in 2024 along the I-95 South corridor that includes Bryan and Liberty Counties.

In Liberty County, 53 establishments in the logistics sector employ about 1,730 workers. In January 2024, Westin Group broke ground for its new Westin Furniture distribution center in Tradeport East Business Center. The 250,000-square-foot facility was completed in November, and the company had already employed 16 people in early December. The company expanded from California to be nearer its major customer base. Plans allow for future expansion with some assembly potentially added to distribution and ecommerce operations and employment could reach 190 workers. Palatize, an Amazon reseller, ramped up operations in its recently completed 25,000 SF building. Employment grew to approximately 20. Creative Home Ideas, a YMF Inc. company, is completing a 350,000 SF facility by early 2025 that will serve as a distribution center for household goods. Initially it will add assembly and have up to 75 employees with as many as 100 within three years.

Further, in Liberty County's Midway Industrial Park, Hugo Boss expanded operations in early 2024. Hugo Boss, the German clothes manufacturer, has deep roots in the county having had a distribution center in operation for over 20 years. Plans include development of its e-commerce activity as well as expanded distribution operations. Hugo Boss moved into an existing 360,000 SF building formerly occupied by Design Group and into some of a 1.4 million SF building and has increased employment from about 180 to just under 400. The 1.4 million SF building is in Tradeport East and owned by Safavieh Development. It also attracted two other businesses besides Hugo Boss, and the two companies that took up occupancy earlier, Hooker Furniture and Safavieh Rugs. The new businesses are Supply One and Liberty Furniture. Together, those new businesses employ about 20 people. Another company that moved into the county during the year was Town & Country Living. It ramped up a home goods distribution center in a 640,000 SF building in Tradeport East that was completed by BlueScope Development the year before. An estimated 40 people are working in the center as of December 2024.

Bulloch County gained 15 establishments in the logistics sector in 2024, increasing the number of firms in the sector to 83. Employment in logistics increased 5.5%, rising to 1,541 from 1,460 in 2023. The Walmart distribution center continues to operate at full capacity and employs 800 workers.

Long-term prospects for logistics and distribution in the region remain strong, given the region's excellent transportation and distribution infrastructure. The Savannah metro area is maturing into an important node in the nation's distribution network.

Acknowledgements

With the greatest of appreciation, contributions to this report were provided by the economic development authorities of Savannah, Bryan County, Bulloch County, Effingham County, Liberty County, Port Wentworth, and Wayne County. Numerous individuals and industry insiders with the region's private and public sector employers contributed data, information, updates, and commentary which enhanced the completeness of the forecast. Thank you!

Savannah Economic Trends

The City of Savannah (103 square miles) is located in Chatham County, which lies south of the Savannah River, the boundary between South Carolina and Georgia. The Savannah Metropolitan Statistical Area comprises of Chatham, Bryan and Effingham counties. Liberty, Long, Bulloch and Wayne counties complete the geographic boundary of the Savannah/Hinesville/Statesboro Combined Statistical Area (CSA). The Savannah Primary Trade Area, a designation that informs linkages in population and shopping trends, also includes Beaufort and Jasper counties in South Carolina.

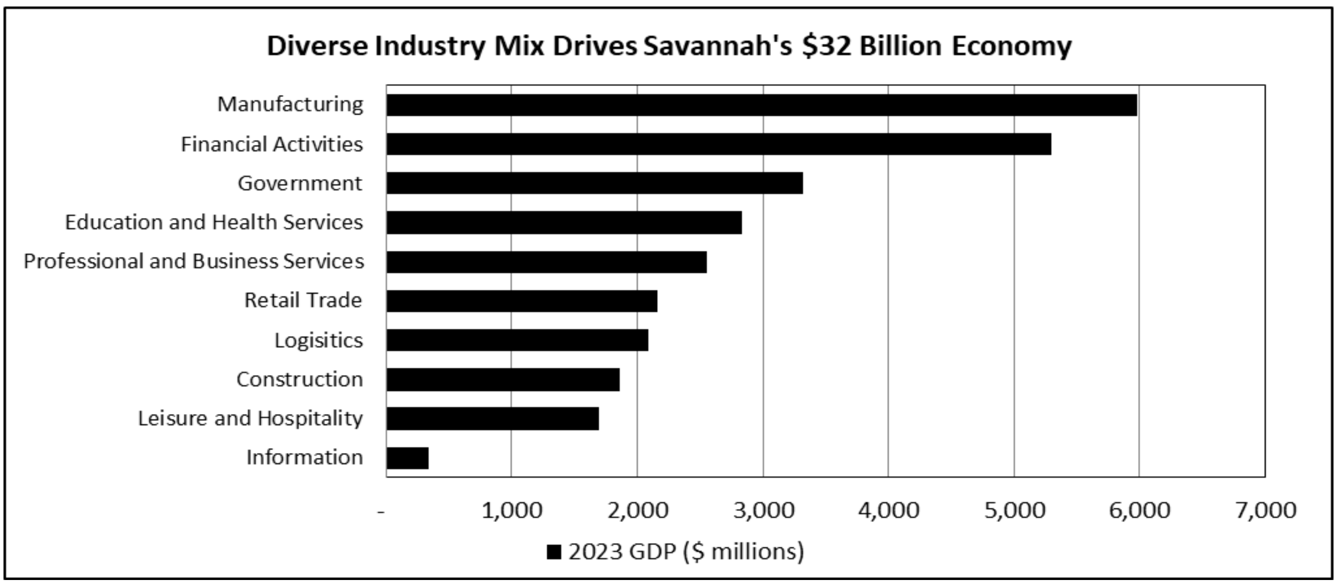
Economy: Gross Domestic Product

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Savannah increased over $1.4 billion (+4.9%) from 2022 to 2023. Savannah's regional economy expanded at the fastest pace (+4.9%) among the state's metro regions. At $31.4 billion, Savannah's economic output (GDP) is the state's third largest, behind only Atlanta and Augusta.

		GDP ($ millions)			
Growth Rank	**MSA**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2022-2023 Change**
1	Savannah	29,165	29,918	31,377	4.9
2	Columbus	18,292	17,873	18,337	2.6
3	Atlanta-Sandy Springs	542,265	563,337	575,118	2.1
4	Augusta-Richmond	34,881	35,281	35,873	1.7
5	Athens-Clarke	12,658	13,223	13,425	1.5
6	Gainesville	14,786	15,870	16,092	1.4
7	Warner Robins	10,120	10,321	10,426	1.0
8	Albany	7,350	7,464	7,536	1.0
9	Dalton	8,744	9,081	9,106	0.3
10	Macon-Bibb County	13,089	13,231	13,070	-1.2

Source: BEA.gov Table (CAGDP9). All data are in 2023 chained (inflation-adjusted) dollars.

A diverse mix of industries, busy ports and strategically networked transportation, logistics, energy and communications infrastructures create a business climate in Savannah that is unmatched in many larger cities. Economic activity generated by Savannah's private sector industries measured $29.1 billion in 2023 and accounted for 90% of the regional economy in 2023. Savannah's exceptionally high value-adding production in manufacturing represents approximately 18.5% of the region's total output.



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, *Gross Domestic Product by Metropolitan Area,* Table CAGDP2. Reported in 2023 current year dollars.
"Wholesale Trade" is suppressed to avoid the disclosure of confidential information.

GDP is the measure of the market value of final goods and services produced within a metropolitan area in a particular period of time. It is the most comprehensive measure of economic activity provided by the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

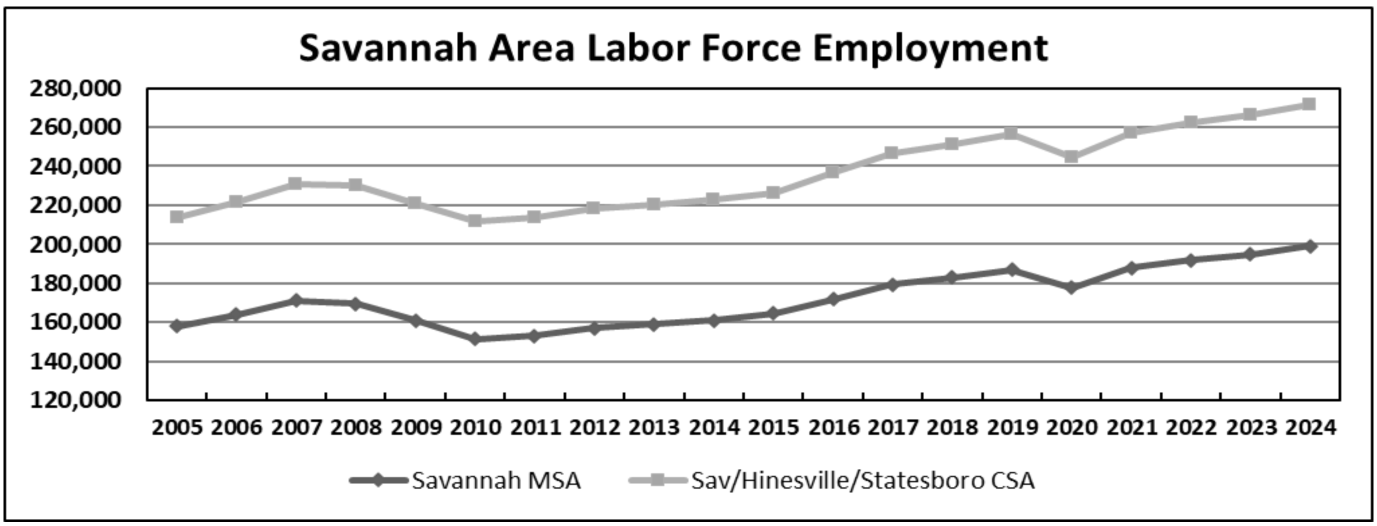
Employment (By Place of Residence)

(Labor Force Employment)

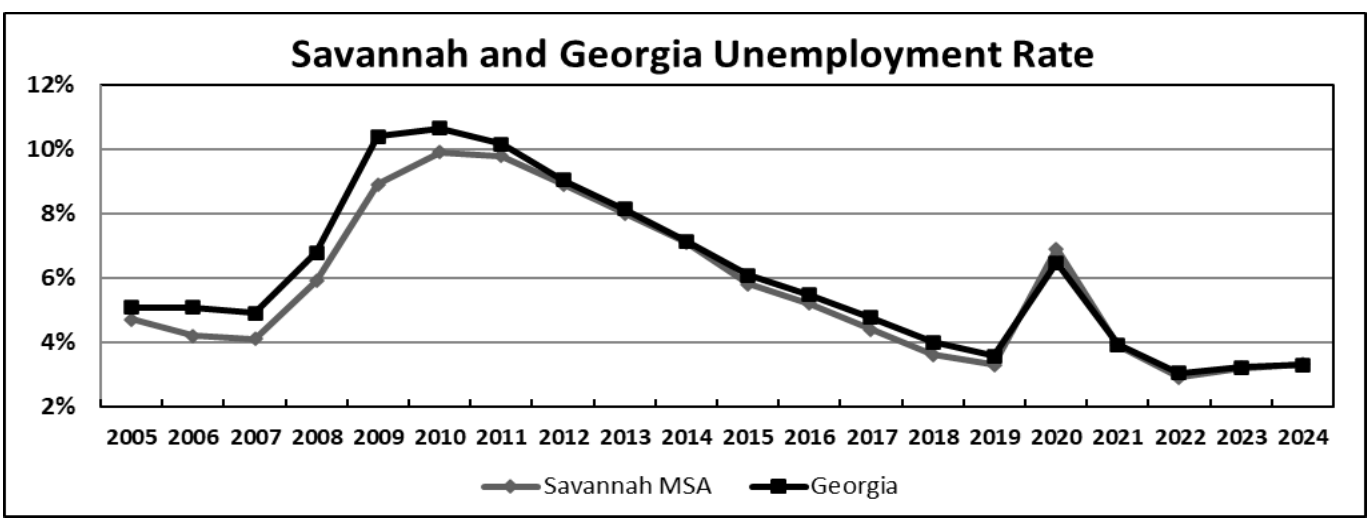
More than 283,000 qualified, talented workers contribute to Savannah's seven-county combined metropolitan statistical area enabling employers with access to a diverse labor force. The area's universities, technical colleges and Workforce Investment Board programs offer Savannah-area employers and students an excellent selection of educational and training resources to meet their current and future needs. Additionally, students at universities and technical colleges may qualify to finance their education with Georgia's HOPE Scholarship and HOPE grant.

Employment in the last few years in the Savannah MSA and CSA reflects a healthy, moderately growing economy. The CSA labor force employment increased 2.1%, or 5,925 workers (annualized, based on YTD through October). From 2023 to 2024, the Savannah MSA experienced an increase of 4,400 employees, a 2.3% gain.

The Savannah MSA unemployment rate increased to 3.3% (in data available through October 2024) from 3.0% in 2023. This very modest increase is partly attributed to partial normalizing of labor force activity in the post pandemic period. Nonetheless, the Savannah area labor market remains tight with high employment and re-absorption of newly unemployed workers.



Source: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Local Area Unemployment Statistics" and GSU Department of Economics. 2024 is annualized average of seasonally adjusted data through October.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Local Area Unemployment Statistics" and GSU Department of Economics. 2024 is annualized average of seasonally adjusted data through October.

Employment (By Place of Work)

(Payroll Employment)

The Savannah MSA workforce increased 1.6% to 207,300 workers from 2023 to 2024. Notable increases occurred in Construction (+600 jobs, +6%), Finance (+400 jobs, +5.5%), Education and Health Services (+1,000 jobs, +3.5%), and Manufacturing (+600 jobs, +2.7%). Two sectors shed jobs: Business and Professional Services (-400 jobs, -1.6%) and Retail Trade (-100 jobs, -1.3%).

Public sector employment added 1,100 jobs, with 1,000 new state and local government employees and 100 new federal government employees.

Employment – Annual Averages Savannah MSA

Industry	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Change 2018-24	Change 2023-24
Total Nonfarm	185,800	189,900	180,400	190,900	200,200	204,000	207,300	11.6%	1.6%
Construction, Mining, & Logging	8,400	8,200	8,200	8,200	9,000	10,000	10,600	26.2%	6.0%
Manufacturing	18,200	18,700	17,500	18,000	19,500	21,900	22,500	23.6%	2.7%
Wholesale Trade	6,500	6,500	6,400	6,700	7,200	7,800	7,900	21.5%	1.3%
Retail Trade	22,200	22,100	21,400	22,400	23,000	23,400	23,300	5.0%	-0.4%
Transportation & Utilities	14,000	14,800	15,700	18,400	18,800	18,800	18,900	35.0%	0.5%
Information	1,900	2,800	1,800	2,400	1,800	1,400	1,400	-26.3%	0.0%
Financial Activities	6,200	6,400	6,100	6,500	6,800	7,300	7,700	24.2%	5.5%
Professional & Business Services	23,400	24,200	23,800	26,500	27,800	25,000	24,600	5.1%	-1.6%
Education & Health Services	26,500	26,600	25,600	25,800	27,300	28,300	29,300	10.6%	3.5%
Leisure & Hospitality	26,600	27,100	22,500	24,800	27,000	27,500	27,600	3.8%	0.4%
Other Services	7,300	7,600	7,000	7,400	8,000	8,300	8,300	13.7%	0.0%
Government-Federal	2,900	2,900	3,000	2,900	2,800	2,900	3,000	3.4%	3.4%
Government-State & Local	21,700	21,800	21,300	20,900	20,900	21,200	22,200	2.3%	4.7%

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, State and Area Employment, Hours and Earnings (2024 data are annualized based on October data.) Retrieved at www.bls.gov on 12/12/2024. BLS data are benchmarked and revised annually; data for 2022-23 have been updated to reflect these changes.

Recent Job Growth

The lion's share of job growth following the Great Recession of 2007-2009 and the pandemic recession occurred in the private sector of the Savannah MSA. Sectors experiencing extraordinary growth since 2018 include the Logistics industry (+35%), Construction (+26.2%), Finance (+24.2%), and Manufacturing (+23.6%). This reflects substantial capital investment in port facilities and consequent growth in cargo handling at the Georgia Ports Authority terminals, notable growth in the region's transportation equipment manufacturing base (aircraft and automobiles) in the past two years and continued real estate development to accommodate population and commercial growth.

Five sectors hold similar proportions of total employment in the Savannah MSA, further attesting to the area's healthy, diverse industry mix: Education and Health Services (14.1%), Leisure and Hospitality (13.3%), Professional and Business Services (11.9%), Retail Trade (11.2%), and Government (10.7%). Manufacturing's growing share of regional employment increased to 10.9% from 9.8% in 2023, with continued increase in share expected as the Hyundai Motor Group Metaplant America facility in Bryan County and its associated supplier manufacturers further ramp up operations in 2025.

Employment data reported above is commonly referred to as "Payroll Employment" (by Place of Work) because it is obtained through a surveying process of employers as compared to the Labor Force Employment (by Place of Residence) data reported on the previous page which is gathered from a survey of households. Further, the "Covered Employment" data reported on the following page is a headcount of employment by place of work drawn from data submitted by employers for the state's unemployment insurance program, and thus, referred to as "covered" employment.

Employment and Wages

(Covered Employment)

As of the second quarter of 2024, the average weekly wage in the Savannah MSA was $1,140, an increase of 5% from Q2 of 2023. Private sector wage growth was particularly strong in Wholesale Trade (13.8%), Real Estate (7.7%), Information (6.6%), Construction (6.5%), and Transportation and Warehousing (5.8%). In five sectors of the regional economy (Manufacturing, Accommodations and Food Services, Education Services, State Government, and Local Government) average weekly wages exceeded the state-wide average.

Wages in Savannah are $157 (or 12%) below the state average and the gap has narrowed from 16% since 2021. However, given the lower cost of living index (88.9) in the region, the purchasing power of earnings is enhanced. This, combined with Savannah's high quality of life, means that workers and employers continue to receive a high return on value for area wages.

Total covered employment in the Savannah MSA increased 2.2% to 196,469 in 2024, Q2 from 192.201 in 2023. The sectors that experienced notable employment growth include Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation (+13.1%), Manufacturing (+10.7%), Professional, Scientific/Tech Services (+7.8%), and Real Estate (+7.5%) and Education Services (+6.8%. Local Government employment increased 4.7% while State Government fell 0.3%.

The region added 281 establishments (net) across all industries, a gain of 2.2% raising the total number of establishments to 13,133. Notable increases in the number of establishments occurred in Transportation and Warehousing (+151, +21.9%), Professional, Scientific/Tech Services (+170, +14.7%), Real Estate (+80, +12.4%), Education Service (+12, +11.2%) and Manufacturing (+38, +11%).

Employment & Wages

2024, Q2

	Average Weekly Wages ($)			Savannah MSA	
Industry	**Savannah MSA**	**Georgia**		**Average Employment**	**Number of Establishments**
Construction	$1,345	$1,453		9,779	1,035
Manufacturing	1,814	1,347		23,607	382
Wholesale Trade	1,733	1,848		6,955	492
Retail Trade	760	770		22,988	1,675
Transportation and Warehousing	1,131	1,271		17,063	842
Utilities	1,865	2,107		936	22
Information	1,362	2,482		1,232	188
Finance and Insurance	1,834	1,978		3,028	564
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	1,075	1,382		3,457	727
Professional, Scientific/Tech Services	1,459	2,072		6,428	1,328
Education Services	1,380	1,312		4,153	119
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,175	1,246		23,023	1,248
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	600	903		3,092	223
Accommodation and Food Services	546	513		24,476	1,422
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	888	962		6,013	860
Government – Federal	1,688	1,828		2,896	67
Government – State	1,477	1,235		4,532	76
Government – Local	1,085	1,067		16,529	55
ALL INDUSTRIES	**$1,140**	**$1,297**		**196,469**	**13,133**

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, *Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2024, Q2.*
Retrieved at www.dol.state.ga.us on 12/12/2024.

Demographics: Population

Dynamic population growth, a robust business climate, and a thriving artistic and cultural community combine to create the highest quality work and home environments in Savannah, one of the nation's loveliest and most historic port cities. Savannah's allure has been recognized nationally as one of the "13 Charming Towns in the US That You Should Put on Your Bucket List" (#2) by MSN Travel, "7 Summer Amtrak Trips That Offer Beautiful Beach Views" by The Travel, and was named #1 for "15 Most Beautiful Cities in America" by MSN Travel, July 2024.

Growing Population Spurs Economic Growth

Savannah's local market region extends in a 40-mile radius from its historic downtown. Commuters, shoppers, students, visitors, and others are economically and socially linked in a primary trade area that includes Liberty and Long counties as part of the Hinesville MSA, Bulloch County of the Statesboro MSA, Wayne County of the Jesup MSA, and South Carolina's Beaufort and Jasper counties.

Chatham County, with 303,655 residents is the fifth most populous county in Georgia and serves as the economic hub of the region. Furthermore, over 850,000 people now live, work, and shop in the Savannah Primary Trade Area, which from 2010 to 2023, added over 10,000 net new residents a year. Long County was the fastest growing county in 2023 (+6.5%). Chatham County, GA added the most people (2,630) from 2022 to 2023. All nine counties in the Savannah primary trade area experienced population growth in 2023. Population growth in 2022 to 2023 was slightly higher than the previous ten-year annual average for the CSA.

Chatham County continues to be the most densely populated county, with 713 persons per square mile. Wayne County is the least densely populated with 31 persons per square mile.

Area	2010	2020	2021	2022	2023	2010-2023 Average Annual Growth	2022-2023 Growth	Land Area (square miles): Persons Per Sq. Mile
Chatham	265,799	295,089	295,690	301,025	303,655	1.2%	0.9%	426:713
Effingham	52,464	65,169	66,764	69,034	71,541	3.0%	3.6%	478:150
Bryan	30,377	45,043	46,974	48,218	49,739	5.3%	3.2%	436:114
Savannah MSA	**348,640**	**405,301**	**409,428**	**418,277**	**424,935**	**1.8%**	**1.6%**	**1340:317**
Bulloch	70,559	79,922	80,671	83,038	84,327	1.6%	1.6%	673:125
Liberty	62,765	65,317	66,800	67,919	69,210	0.9%	1.9%	490:141
Long	14,574	16,270	17,108	18,395	19,594	2.9%	6.5%	400:49
Wayne	30,074	19,952	19,758	19,765	19,820	-2.8%	0.3%	642:31
Savannah/ Hinesville/ Statesboro CSA	**526,612**	**586,762**	**593,765**	**607,394**	**617,886**	**1.4%**	**1.7%**	**3545:174**
Beaufort (SC)	162,829	187,815	191,997	196,147	198,979	1.9%	1.4%	576:345
Jasper (SC)	24,948	29,150	30,431	31,986	33,544	2.9%	4.9%	655:51
Savannah Primary Trade Area	**714,389**	**803,727**	**816,193**	**835,527**	**850,409**	**1.6%**	**1.8%**	**4885:174**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Population Estimates program, retrieved 12/13/24.
Data for 2010 to 2020 are "vintage" 2020, while data for 2021 to 2023 are "vintage" 2023 data.
NOTE: Statesboro/Bulloch County added to CSA in 2013. Jesup/Wayne County added to CSA in 2018.

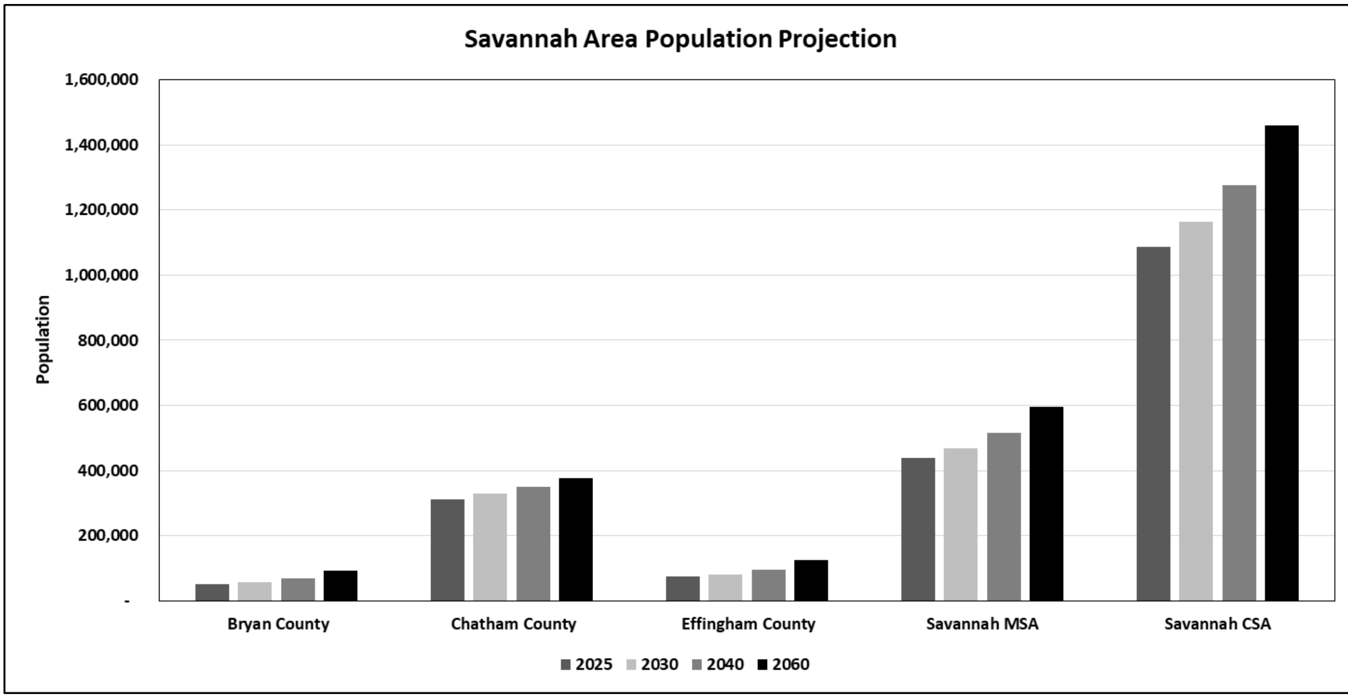
Population

Projected Growth and Current Age Distribution

Savannah MSA Population Projected to Grow 36% by 2060

By 2060, over 1.4 million people will call the 7-county Savannah/Hinesville/Statesboro CSA home. From 2025 to 2060, the population in the Savannah MSA is projected to grow 36%, adding more than 150,000 people from 2025 to 2060, according to the Georgia Office of Planning and Budget. During this period, Chatham's population is projected to increase by 21%; Bryan will jump 80%; and Effingham County will grow by 69%.

s



ource: State of Georgia Office of Budget and Planning, *Georgia 2060: Population Projections,* obtained 10/28/2024.

In the Savannah MSA, 22.5% of the population is younger than 18 years. The Savannah MSA has many residents in their adult prime spending years with more than 61.6% of the population being from 18 to 64 years of age. In the Savannah MSA, Bryan County has the largest share of the population under 18 years of age (28.9%), while Chatham County holds the highest share of those over the age of 65: 17.2%.

Population Characteristics

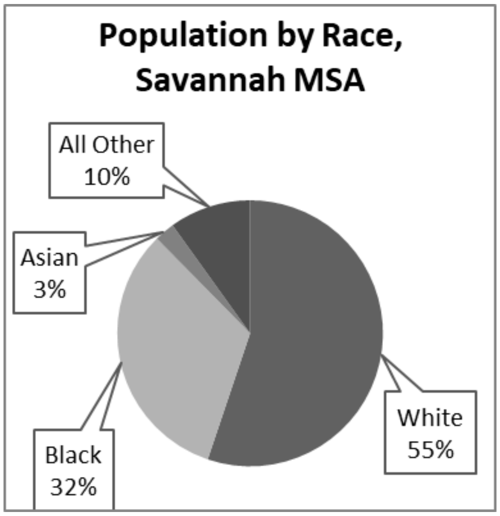
			2023 One-Year Estimate		
Area	**2023 Total Population**	**% Male | Female**	**% Under 18 Years**	**% 18 to 64 Years**	**% 65 Years and Over**
Chatham	303,655	48%|52%	20.4%	62.4%	17.2%
Effingham	71,541	48%|52%	26.9%	60.1%	13.0%
Bryan	49,739	48%|52%	28.9%	58.7%	12.4%
Savannah MSA	424,935	48%|52%	22.5%	61.6%	15.9%
Savannah/Hinesville/Statesboro CSA	629,503	51%|49%	23.0%	62.4%	14.7%
Savannah Primary Trade Area	862,026	49%|51%	21.4%	60.2%	18.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Annual Population Estimates program and American Community Survey program, retrieved 12/13/24.

Population

Distribution by Household Income and Race

In the Savannah MSA, 55% of the population is white, while 32% is African-American (five-year U.S. Census data for 2023). The Hispanic/Latino population of any race is 7.7%.



Hispanic or Latino (of any race):

Savannah MSA	7.7%
Chatham County	8.0%
Effingham County	6.1%
Bryan County	7.9%

All Other, Savannah MSA:

American Indian/Alaska Native	0.2%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.1%
Two or more Races	6.5%
Some Other Race	3.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023: ACS 5-year estimates, American Community Survey,12/12/24

In the Savannah MSA, the five-year U.S. Census estimate for average household income is $99,643. In the Savannah Primary Trade Area household income is highest in Bryan County ($124,970) and Beaufort County, SC ($123,126).

The Savannah MSA has 67% of its households with income over $50,000; Effingham County has 74%, and Bryan County has 80%, while the comparable figure for the state of Georgia is 66%. Bryan County (25.9%) and Beaufort County (23.7%) have the highest concentration of households earning more than $150,000.

Savannah Area 2019-2023 Estimates of Income (In 2023 Inflation Adjusted Dollars)

Area	Number of Households	Average Household Income	Median Household Income	Less than $25,000	$25,000 to $49,999	$50,000 to $149,999	$150,000 and Over
Chatham County	119,241	95,384	69,575	16.0%	20.1%	48.0%	15.9%
Effingham County	23,555	104,190	85,465	10.2%	15.6%	54.7%	19.5%
Bryan County	15,821	124,970	94,234	9.8%	10.5%	53.8%	25.9%
Savannah MSA	**158,617**	**99,643**	**74,632**	**14.5%**	**18.5%**	**49.6%**	**17.5%**
Bulloch County	30,276	79,142	56,832	22.3%	22.6%	44.0%	11.2%
Liberty County	23,406	73,038	59,013	16.4%	24.4%	50.2%	9.0%
Long County	5,836	74,088	64,747	17.5%	19.2%	56.0%	7.3%
Wayne County	11,045	65,837	49,562	26.2%	24.3%	41.1%	8.3%
Savannah/Hinesville/Statesboro CSA	**233,056**	**91,570**	**68,345**	**16.5%**	**19.9%**	**48.6%**	**15.0%**
Beaufort County, SC	76,794	123,126	84,819	11.3%	16.6%	48.5%	23.7%
Jasper County, SC	12,420	78,167	63,503	21.3%	20.1%	46.5%	12.0%
Savannah Primary Trade Area	**342,270**	**98,724**	**NA**	**15.4%**	**19.1%**	**48.25%**	**17.0%**
Georgia	**4,008,013**	**103,618**	**74,664**	**15.9%**	**18.2%**	**46.3%**	**19.7%**

Industry: Construction

Residential Permitting Activity in Chatham County

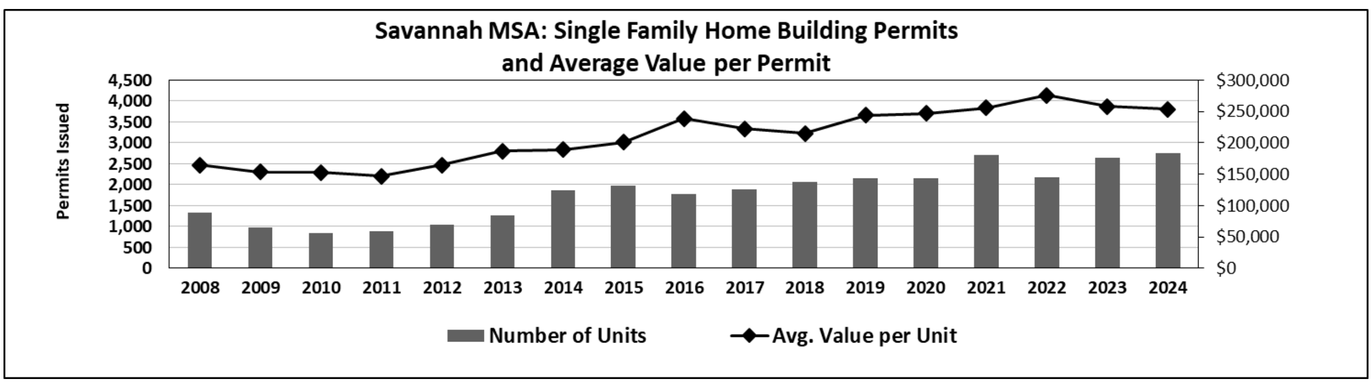
The total value of permitted residential construction in Chatham County was $439 million in 2024, a modest increase of 7.2% from 2023. The value of multi-family home permits issued rebounded notably to $100.4 million, roughly equal to the level in 2022. The total number of residential units permitted increased to 2,491 from 1,672 in 2023.

Chatham County Building Permits						
	Single-Family		Multi-family Units		Total	
	Permits	Construction Cost	Permits	Construction Cost	Permits	Construction Cost
2008	1,117	163,057,158	523	42,084,952	1,640	205,142,110
2009	785	108,170,515	342	17,654,193	1,127	125,824,708
2010	676	87,335,207	281	14,345,471	957	101,680,678
2011	655	84,463,420	402	24,873,596	1,057	109,337,016
2012	811	122,205,698	204	11,515,108	1,015	133,720,806
2013	901	156,331,898	149	8,490,860	1,050	164,822,758
2014	1,048	205,885,088	269	45,841,262	1,317	251,726,350
2015	933	200,307,059	26	2,210,000	959	202,517,059
2016	780	194,149,166	178	13,628,744	958	207,777,910
2017	812	182,019,357	68	4,116,000	880	186,135,357
2018	1,081	223,544,604	986	170,771,279	2,067	394,315,883
2019	887	208,119,293	431	37,544,044	1,318	245,663,337
2020	808	178,153,721	946	63,277,507	1,754	241,431,228
2021	1,441	361,614,823	463	44,009,032	1,904	405,623,855
2022	1,082	314,292,876	895	105,464,432	2,060	419,757,308
2023	1,597	393,722,446	75	13,615,645	1,672	407,338,091
2024	1,494	338,484,568	997	100,370,915	2,491	438,855,483

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Annual New Privately-Owned Residential Building Permits. Retrieved 12/16/2024. Multi-family consists of two family, three or four family, and five or more family categories. Current year dollars.

Residential Permitting Activity in the Savannah MSA

The regional housing market in the three-county metro area continues to demonstrate strength with an increase in the total of single family home building permits by +4.6%, The average value per unit issued decreased 1.7% from the previous year but still sits at a resounding average of $253,203, building permit value does not include land cost.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Census and Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University. http://recenter.tamu.edu, retrieved 12/17/2024. 2024 is annualized YTD though October.

Industry: Health Care

Two nationally recognized medical centers deliver top quality health care in the city: Memorial University Medical Center and the St. Joseph's/Candler Health System. These centers, and the advanced medical specialties they offer, attract people from all over southeast Georgia and the southern coastal area of South Carolina. The medical facilities are also the top two private nonmanufacturing employers in the metropolitan area.

Health care is $2 billion of personal income in the Savannah MSA in 2023 or 8% of total regional personal income.

Memorial University Medical Center
www.memorialhealth.com

Memorial Health is a leader in healthcare in Savannah and southeast Georgia. It boasts the region's only Level I trauma center, Level III neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), comprehensive stroke center and the Memorial Health Dwaine and Cynthia Willett Children's Hospital of Savannah. In 2018, Memorial Health joined HCA Healthcare, one of the nation's leading providers of healthcare services. Over the past seven years, the regional healthcare system has experienced unprecedented growth. HCA Healthcare has invested more than $325M in capital improvements, equipment and technology to date including:

- *New freestanding Children's Hospital of Savannah ($66M)*
- *56-bed expansion in Memorial's Heart & Vascular Institute ($30M)*
- *Land to build freestanding ERs in Pooler and Richmond Hill ($12M)*
- *28-bed expansion in Level III NICU ($30M)*
- *Renovation of Memorial's main patient tower ($20M)*
- *New medical office buildings on Memorial campus and in Pooler*
- *Robotic-assisted technologies for orthopedic & spine surgery, urological and head & neck surgery and bronchoscopy*
- *State-of-the-art technology for the hospital's interventional GI lab, special procedures unit*

Memorial Health has also benefitted its community since joining HCA Healthcare. The hospital has paid more than $125M in taxes and contributed more than $1.75M to charitable organizations in our region.

St. Joseph's/Candler Health System
www.sjchs.org

St. Joseph's/Candler is the region's largest healthcare provider, featuring top specialist and the latest technology to give patients the highest quality of care. St. Joseph's/Candler Health System began in 1997 when two Savannah hospitals partnered to create the largest faith-based nonprofit health institution in Savannah and its surrounding areas. Its two anchor hospitals, St. Joseph's Hospital and Candler Hospital, have total capacities of 330 beds and 384 beds respectively. St. Joseph's/Candler (SJ/C) offers primary care top-level primary care and specialists across the region. The SJ/C Physician Network provides patients with convenient Primary Care offices and highly-trained specialists. For the last decade the system has expanded access to patients into southeast Georgia and South Carolina including specialized inpatient and outpatient services for oncology, pulmonology, cardiovascular, digestive disease services, neurological/neurosurgical and orthopedics.

To create better access, the system built a new 83,000-sqaure-foot campus in Pooler and offers a broad range of medical services for the growing population in west Chatham and nearby counties, creating a one-stop, convenient healthcare destination redefining the healthcare experience through imagination, innovation, and modern technology. A regional campus in Richmond Hill in Bryan County at Heartwood opened in 2024 that provides urgent care, primary care and specialty services.

In 2020, SJ/C has opened a regional medical campus in Bluffton, SC, that greatly expands services and access to healthcare for that rapidly growing community. The campus is located at Buckwalter Place. SJ/C has provided medical services in Bluffton and Hilton Head for the past 20 years, and this development aims to consolidate most of these medical services in one location that is at the center of growth in Bluffton.

SJ/C has a robust community outreach program to care for the uninsured and underinsured. In 2012, the health system received the Foster McGaw Prize for Excellence in Community Services from the American Hospital Association.

Source: From public relations offices at MUMC and SJCHS. Updated 12/2024.

Industry: Major Employers

Major Employers (Non-Manufacturing)

Employer	Service / Product	Employees
St. Joseph's/Candler	Hospital	4,963
Memorial University Medical Center	Hospital	4,300
Walmart	Retail	2,900-5,000
Colonial Group, Inc.	Energy, chemicals, logistics	2,249
East Georgia Regional Medical Center	Hospital	1,134
Optim Health System	Healthcare	1,027
Walmart Distribution Centers	Distribution	1,000
McDonalds	Restaurant	1,000-2,000
Target Distribution Center	Distribution	837
Goodwill Industries of the Coastal Empire	Adult vocational rehabilitation	685
The Landings Club	Private membership club	675
Kroger	Retail food	565-1300
Publix	Retail food	525-1200
Dollar Tree	Distribution	600
SouthCoast Health	Healthcare	592
Wayne Memorial Hospital	Hospital	525
UTC Overseas	Logistics solutions	500-1,000
Spirit Construction Services	General contractors	500-1,000
Georgia Regional Hospital	Hospital	500-1,000
Chick-Fil-A	Restaurant	490-1,000
Webstraurant Distribution Center	Distribution	471
Effingham County Hospital Authority	Hospital	450
Southern Company	Electric & natural gas utility	396
Hugo Boss Distribution Center	Distribution	380
25 other businesses	Various	250-499

Education / Government / Public Service

Federal Government: Ft. Stewart/Hunter Army Airfield (DoD)	Federal civilian personnel	6,579
Savannah-Chatham County Board of Education	Public schools	5,650
Georgia Southern University	Education	2,707
Chatham County	Government	2,345
Savannah College of Art & Design	Education	2,280
City of Savannah	Government	2,254
Effingham County Board of Education	Public schools	2,203
YMCA of Coastal Georgia	Civic association	1,751
Georgia Ports Authority	Seaport terminal operation	1,750
Bulloch County Board of Education	Public schools	1,724
Liberty County Board of Education	Public schools	1,446
Bryan County Board of Education	Public schools	1,431

Note: The International Longshoreman Association represents about 2,200 unionized workers at Georgia Ports Authority facilities under hire by cargo handling companies.
Sources: Employers, SEDA, county development authorities, or Georgia Department of Labor if reported as a range.

Industry: Major Manufacturers

The Savannah MSA's manufacturing firms account for 18.5% of the area's economic output as measured by GDP, accounting for $6 billion of output in 2023. As of mid-2024, the number of manufacturing establishments in the Savannah CSA was 510 firms employing 29,632 workers with average weekly wage of $1,724.

Manufacturers, Savannah-Hinesville-Statesboro CSA

Corporation	Product	County	Employees
Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation	Jet aircraft, aerospace equipment	CH	13,115
SNF	Chemicals	LI	1,706
Hyundai Motor Group Metaplant America	Electric vehicles	BR	1,119
Georgia-Pacific Savannah River Mill	Paper products	EF	1,030
JCB	Construction equipment	CH	982
Rayonier Advanced Materials	Forest products	WA	851
International Paper	Paper products, bleached pulp	CH	750
Great Dane Trailers	Refrigerated trailers	BU	487
Briggs & Stratton	Small engines	BU	451
Edwards Interiors Aerospace	Aerospace parts/furnishings	EF	375
SACK	Heavy Com'l/ Industrial Construction	BU	369
Daniel Defense	Outdoor and sporting goods	BR	350
Georgia Transformers	Transformers	EF	350
DS Smith	Mill, lumber, wood products	LI	325
AJIN Georgia	Automotive parts	BU	300
Sewon	Automotive parts	EF	300
Howmet Aerospace	Engine and turbine components	LI	296
Brasseler USA	Dental instruments	CH	250-499
Derst Baking Co.	Baked goods	CH	250-499
U.S Sugar	Sugar	CH	250-499
Mitsubishi Power	Turbines	CH	250-499
SECO Ecoplastic	Automotive parts	BU	232
MacAljon Affiliates	Industrial contracting	BR	210
Cardinal Glass	High-end architectural glass	BU	171
Great Southern Wood Preserving	Treated lumber	WA	163
Orafol, USA	Industrial tapes	BR	146
Interfor	Wood products	EF	140
Johnson Matthey Process Technologies	Catalyst production	CH	150-249
Roger Wood Foods Inc.	Smoked sausage, meats	CH	100-249
Kraton	Chemicals	CH	100-249
BASF Catalysts	Catalysts	CH	100-249
Delta Metals	Sheet metal	CH	100-249
Nine Line Apparel	Apparel	CH	100-249
Owens Corning	Building materials	CH	100-249
Precision Machine	Aerospace	CH	100-249
Standard Concrete Products, Inc	Concrete	CH	100-249
10 other manufacturers	various	-	100-249

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, SEDA, county development authorities. Retrieved/obtained 12/2024. Note: BR is Bryan County, BU is Bulloch County, CH is Chatham County, EF is Effingham County, LI is Liberty County, WA is Wayne County. 21 additional manufacturers reporting 50-99 employees.

Industry: Military and Federal Government

The federal government presence in southeastern Georgia is a substantial and steadying component of the regional economy. In additional to the notable military presence in the region, additional federal government agencies are present including the U.S. District Court, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Customs & Border Protection, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Census Bureau, and Internal Revenue Service.

Ft. Stewart, located in the Hinesville MSA immediately south of the Savannah metro region, and Hunter Army Airfield (AAF) in the City of Savannah generate substantial economic activity in the Savannah CSA. Ft. Stewart and Hunter AAF have an annual financial impact of $6 billion. Ft. Stewart is the largest military installation east of the Mississippi River and covers nearly 288,000 acres with another 6,000 acres at Hunter Army Airfield. Additionally, about 12,840 military retirees live in the region. In 2023, total military employment in the Savannah and Hinesville MSAs was approximately 22,600 while federal civilian employment was 6,588.

Military and Federal Government Employment in Savannah and Hinesville MSAs						
	Military Personnel			**Federal Civilian Workers**		
	Employment	Compensation (Billions)	Compensation per Employee	Employment	Compensation (Millions)	Compensation per Employee
2023	NA	$2.3	NA	6,588	$719	$109,138
2022	22,611	$2.2	$97,000	6,579	$666	$101,300
2021	22,552	$2.1	$94,700	6,645	$660	$99,400
2020	21,962	$2.0	$90,400	6,804	$643	$94,500
2019	21,695	$1.9	$87,000	6,719	$632	$94,100
Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Tables CAINC6N and Georgia Department of Labor, Industry Mix Tables . Note. Compensation includes wages and salaries as well as benefits.						

The Savannah Air National Guard Base is at the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport. Based there are the 165th Airlift Wing, and the Air Dominance Center. The 165th's mission focus is Air Mobility - flying the C-130J Super Hercules cargo aircraft - delivering global air transportation of equipment and supplies during times of war and natural disasters.

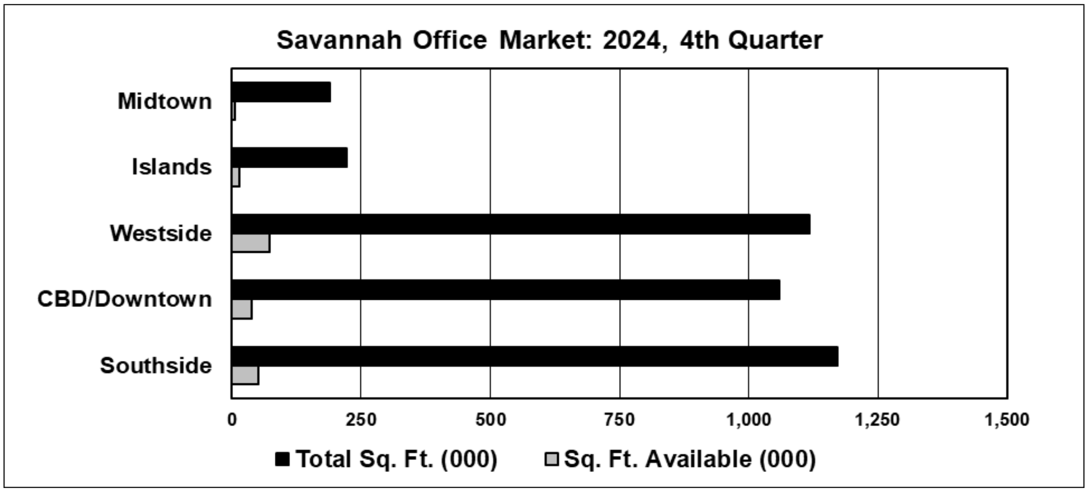
The Air Dominance Center (ADC), a Combat Readiness Training Center, plays host to units from across the country benefiting from the tremendous airspace and facilities supporting the world's most technologically advanced fighter aircraft. After a 19-year hiatus, the ADC hosted William Tell, the world's largest fighter competition in Sep 2023 and will host the event again in Sep 2025. Notably, funding for a $26 million dining facility is being worked to support the Airmen who train annually at the ADC. The direct expenditures of both units are $119 million, 80% of which is compensation and allowances to military and civilian personnel. In 2022, the total economic impact was $203 million.

Air National Guard	
165th Airlift Wing	FY 2022
Military/Civilian Pay and Allowances	$84,902,944
Goods and Services	$21,889,191
Military Construction	$12,911,398
Direct Expenditures	$119,703,533
Economic Impact Multiplier	1.7
Total Economic Impact	$203,496,006
Source: Georgia Air National Guard, 12/24.	

Industry: Real Estate

Office and Industrial Markets

At the close of the fourth quarter in 2024, metro Savannah's office market recorded a slight increase in the overall vacancy rate to 4.9% from 4.3% at year-end 2023. Of non-owner-occupied office space 5,000 square feet or larger, the office space inventory in Metro Savannah was 3.76 million square feet. The market occupancy rate remained above 90% for the third consecutive year at 95.1% after hovering in the range of 86% to 91% in the preceding five years. In the MSA, office rental rates increased 7.0% in 2024, and had the largest upswing in the Westside (+9.2%). Rates also increased in Midtown (+8.4%), the downtown Savannah central business district (+8.1%), the Islands (+5.3%) and the Southside (+4.1%) markets.



Source: Gilbert & Ezelle Commercial Real Estate, Cushman & Wakefield *Marketbeat Report*, Q4 2024, 12/2024.

Savannah MSA Office Market		2024: 4th Quarter	
Total Square Feet Reported			3,759,000
Vacant Space (sq. ft.) Reported			184,191
Vacancy Rate			4.9%
Gross Rental Rate (per sq. ft.) by Market			
Savannah MSA	$26.93	Westside	$24.92
CBD/Downtown	$31.92	Midtown	$25.67
Southside	$25.13	Islands	$27.00

Source: Gilbert & Ezelle | Cushman & Wakefield *Marketbeat Report, Q4 2024*, obtained 12/2024.
Gross Rental Rate refers to the overall weighted average for all property classes.

Industrial Market

Metro Savannah's industrial and warehousing market surged again in 2024. Industrial activity was highlighted by 15 million square feet of inventory absorbed by the Hyundai facility in Bryan County and related supplier manufacturers in the fourth quarter. Port-related trade and distribution increased demand amid continuing substantial supply-side growth. With the delivery of new inventory, the overall vacancy rate is 8.6% at the end of 2024. New inventory of 27.8 million square feet was completed and delivered in 2024.

Savannah Industrial Market

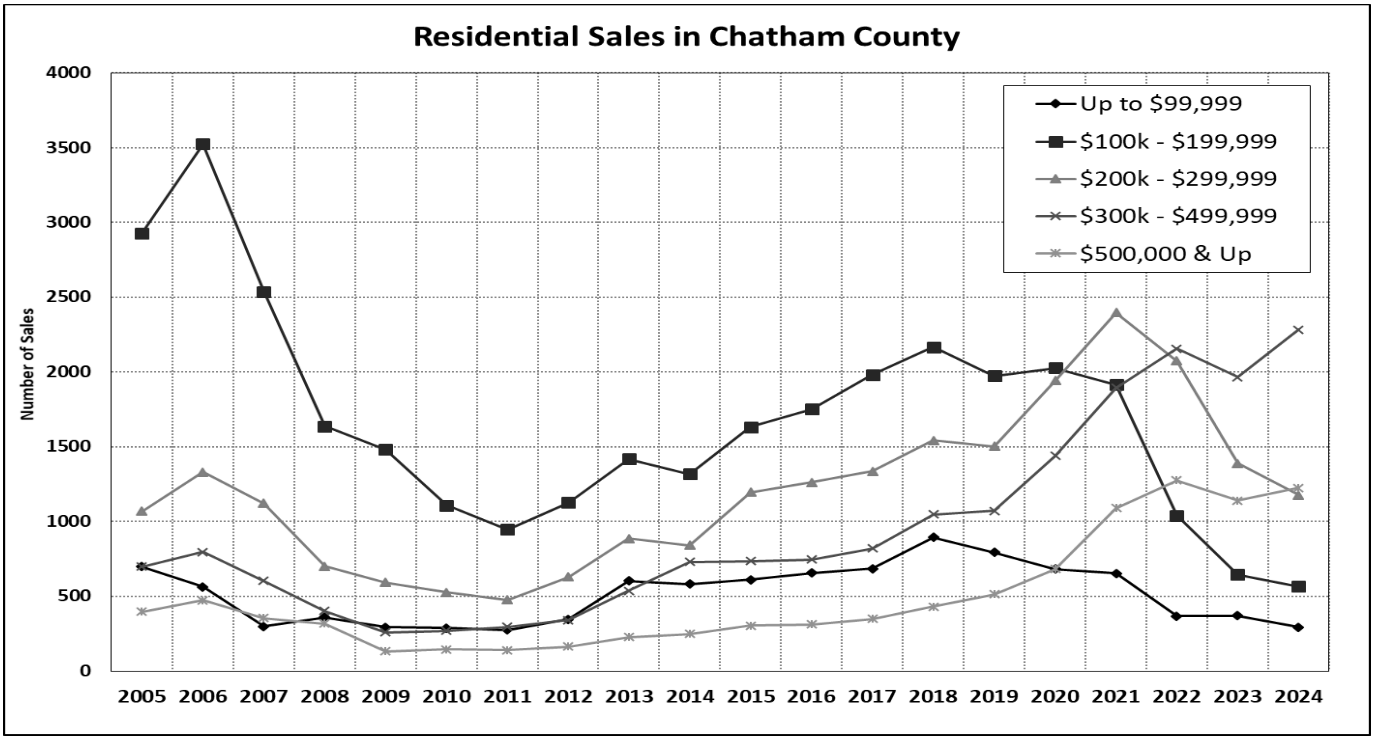
	2024:Q4	2023:Q4	2022:Q4	2021:Q4
Total Inventory	153,700,000 Sq. Ft	125,854,000 Sq. Ft.	105,027,000 Sq. Ft.	89,300,000 Sq. Ft.
New Construction Added to Inventory	27,846,000 Sq. Ft	21,100,000 Sq. Ft.	15,700,000 Sq. Ft.	8,000,000 Sq. Ft.
Total Inventory Available for Sale/Lease	13,237,000 Sq. Ft	8,748,000 Sq. Ft.	702,000 Sq. Ft	480,000 Sq. Ft
Overall Vacancy Rate	8.6%	7.0%	0.7%	0.5%

Source: Gilbert & Ezelle | Cushman & Wakefield *Marketbeat Report, Q4 2024,* obtained 12/2024.

Real Estate

Residential

Total qualified home sales, including single family homes, townhouses, 2-4 units, and condominiums in Chatham County increased 0.6% in 2024 to a total of 5,544 sales (estimated from data through 11/30/24) sales as compared to 5,511 in 2023. The median sale price of a qualified home transaction in Chatham County was $340,100, an increase of 63% as compared to the 2023 median of $320,000. Market share of sales at greater than $300,000 increased to 63% in 2024 from 57% in 2023. Sales greater than $1 million were 329 units, 50% higher than 2023.



Source: Chatham County Board of Assessors. Includes qualified residential sales. 2024 projected based on data through 11/30/24. Retrieved 12/10/2024.

Savannah continues to be in a favorable position with respect to home prices among comparable major metropolitan cities and port cities. Savannah's Zillow-measured $320,344 median list price for a single family home is well below that of the comparable national median list price of $358,695 and Savannah has a very affordable housing market compared to southeastern and port cities.

Single Family Home Price Comparison, 2024

Southeastern Cities		Port Cities	
Raleigh, NC	$445,730	San Francisco, CA	$1,396,009
Nashville, TN	$440,409	Seattle, WA	$928,587
Atlanta, GA	$437,783	Boston, MA	$793,284
Orlando, FL	$406,378	Charleston, SC	$548,259
Charlotte, NC	$403,257	Tampa, FL	$389,746
Gainesville, FL	$318,879	Virginia Beach, VA	$413,665
Savannah, GA	**$320,344**	Jacksonville, FL	$303,590
Louisville, KY	$247,759	**Savannah, GA**	**$320,344**
Columbia, SC	$234,469	Chicago, IL	$307,114
Montgomery, AL	$141,656	New Orleans, LA	$231,042

Source: Zillow.com average price for middle price tier single family homes. Retrieved 12/24.

Industry: Tourism

Savannah's tourism industry and visitor economy continues to be one of the region's top economic drivers. In 2023, 17.3 million people visited the Savannah/Chatham County area, generating $4.75 billion is visitor spending. Additionally, Savannah continues to be recognized as a world-class destination with top places to visit in the U.S. accolades from noted national travel and lifestyle publications and websites like MSN Travel, Travel + Leisure, Southern Living, TripAdvisor.com and Home Stratosphere.

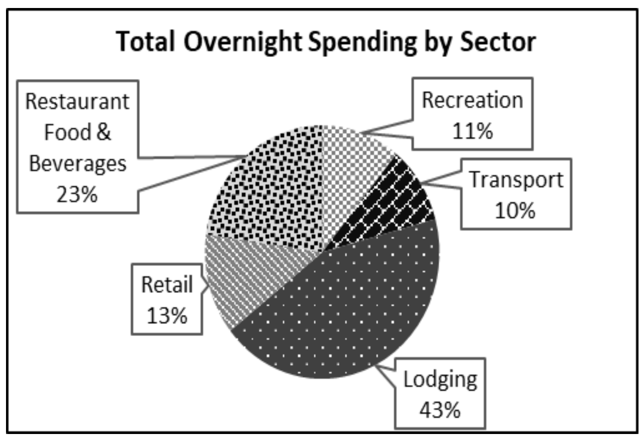
The Savannah tourism sector continued its strong post-pandemic growth. In 2023, Savannah hosted 10 million overnight visitors and 7.3 million day-visitors. The demand for rooms increased 1.1% in 2023 while the supply of available rooms increased 1.2% to 18,767. In 2023, room tax revenue rose to $48.7 million, up 9.4% from 2022, more than double from the pandemic year of 2020. Visitor spending in 2023 increased 6.8% to $4.7 billion as compared to 2022.

Tourism's Impact on Savannah/Chatham County

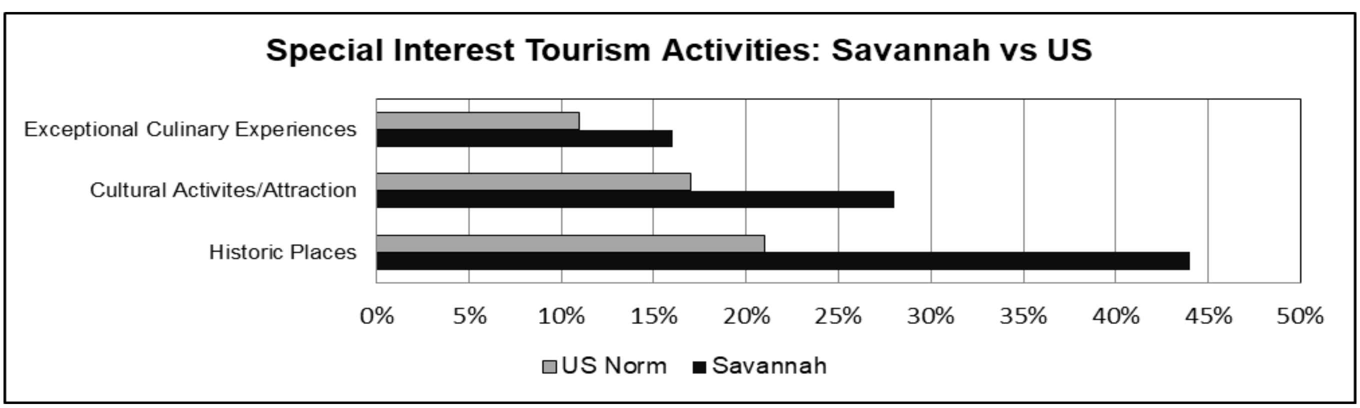
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of Lodging Rooms (1)	16,849	16,567	18,220	18,549	18,767
Person-Stays (Overnight) (2)	8.4 Million	7.7 million	8.3 Million	9.7 Million	10 Million
Room Night Demand (1)	4.1 Million	2.9 Million	4.3 Million	4.7 Million	4.75 Million
Direct Spending (2)	$3.1 Billion	$2.8 Billion	$3.2 Billion	$4.4 Billion	$4.7 Billion
Room Tax Revenue (3)	$27.7 Million	$18.2 Million	$36.6 Million	$44.5 Million	$48.7 Million

Sources:
1 Smith Travel Research – Chatham County
2 Longwoods International
3 City of Savannah/Chatham County/Tybee Island

Savannah's visitors enjoy year-round activities. Although the busiest season of visitations is April until June, the flow of visitors is spread fairly evenly across the year. For overnight visitors, the mix is 89% leisure travel and 11% business and business-leisure. 39% of leisure travelers are visiting friends and relatives. 68% of over-night visitors are repeat visitors and stay approximately 2.8 nights in Savannah.



Savannah excels in special interest tourism activities and continues to be an exciting destination. Savannah's distinctive qualities allow the city to stand out in the crowd. In top interest categories for overnight visitors, Savannah remains far ahead of typical national levels in exceptional culinary experiences, cultural activities and historic places.



Source: VisitSavannah.

Infrastructure: Education

The seven-county CSA* employed approximately 18,204 faculty, administrators, and staff in public and private educational services in 2023-2024. Of the metro area's population above age 25, approximately 91.1% are high school graduates or have higher education. Approximately 33.3% of the population above the age of 25 has a bachelor's degree or higher level of educational attainment. (*See Demographics page for CSA definition.)

Pre-K-12 Public Education
The District's enrollment is 36,000 students. There are 58 schools across the public-school system including 23 elementary schools, 8 K-8 schools, 8 middle schools, 11 high schools, and a virtual academy for students in grades 3–11. The district also supports 5 charter schools and 8 other educational centers. The School District continues to improve educational offerings through facility improvements under the Educational Special Purpose Local Option Sales tax. The Savannah-Chatham Public School System was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) for three schools: Southwest Elementary, Southwest Middle, and Godley Station K8. The New Hampstead K-8 school in western Chatham County added a capacity of 1,500 students to the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System. The District's STEM Academy at Bartlett has twice been named the top STEM Middle School Program in the nation. Virginia L. Heard Elementary Academy is the only State of Georgia STEM certified elementary school in the District. SCCPSS has also steadily improved the graduation rate to outperform the state average for the past 6 years. The current graduation rate stands at 86.8% (SY 23-24), exceeding the state graduation rate for the ninth consecutive year. For more information, please visit sccpss.com.

Higher Education: Colleges, Universities and Technical Schools
Over 78,000 students are enrolled in the 17 institutions of higher learning in and around the Savannah area. While several of these schools consistently produce graduates who contribute to the region, others are recent newcomers attracted to the demands for advanced learning created by Savannah's vibrant and growing economy.

Georgia Southern University (GSU): Georgia Southern University is the state's largest and most comprehensive center of higher education south of Atlanta. With more than 150 degree programs at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels, Georgia Southern has been designated a Carnegie Doctoral/R2 "high research" university and serves over 27,500 students from all 50 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico as well as 140 nations. With three campuses in Savannah, Statesboro, Hinesville and online instruction, the University provides a diverse student population with expert faculty, world-class scholarship and relevant, career-focused, hands-on learning opportunities. Georgia Southern creates lifelong learners who serve as responsible scholars, leaders and stewards in their communities. www.georgiasouthern.edu.

Coastal Georgia Center: Operated by Savannah State University, the Coastal Georgia Center offers a convenient location in historic downtown Savannah with a professional environment for students enrolled in graduate-level courses in business, public administration and social work. The center is an outreach component of the University System of Georgia, promoting economic development and provides space for meetings, seminars and regional conferences. www.savannahstate.edu/cgc/

Georgia Tech Savannah: The Savannah campus of Georgia Tech provides professional education to the Southeastern part of Georgia working in partnership with industry and K-12 outreach. It also is the home to many parts of Georgia Tech which include the Center for Education Integrating Science, Mathematics and Computing (CEISMC), the Enterprise Innovation Institute, the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP), the Georgia Tech Procurement Assistance Center (GTPAC), the Advanced Technology Development Center (ATDC), and the Center of Innovation for Logistics. The Savannah Campus also has an applied research component to its mission working with industry to help solve problems in Supply Chain, Advanced Manufacturing, Aerospace and Resiliency just to name a few areas. The GT Savannah Campus works with local, regional and national/international business and citizens for impact in the region. savannah.gatech.edu

SCAD: The University for Creative Careers: SCAD is a private, nonprofit, accredited university, offering 100 graduate and undergraduate degree programs across locations in Atlanta and Savannah, Georgia; Lacoste, France; and online via SCADnow. SCAD enrolls more than 17,500 undergraduate and graduate students from more than 120 countries. The future-minded SCAD curriculum engages professional-level technology and myriad advanced learning resources, affording students opportunities for internships, professional certifications, and real-world assignments with corporate partners through SCADpro, the university's renowned research lab and prototype generator. SCAD also has earned top rankings for degree programs in interior design, architecture, film, fashion, digital media, and more. Career success is woven into every fiber of the university, resulting in a superior alumni employment rate. According to a recent study, 99% of SCAD graduates were employed, pursuing further education, or both within 10 months of graduation. SCAD provides students and alumni with ongoing career support through personal coaching, alumni programs, a professional presentation studio, and more. Visit www.scad.edu

Savannah State University: Established in 1890, Savannah State University (SSU) – a four-year institution – is one of the University System of Georgia's longest-standing institutions. It is also the oldest public historically black college or university (HBCU) in Georgia and the oldest institution of higher learning in the historic city of Savannah. SSU has a diverse student body of approximately 3,100. It offers 30 undergraduate degree majors and five graduate degree programs in four colleges – Business Administration, Sciences and Technology, and Liberal Arts and Social Sciences, and Education. The institution also offers distinctive programs such as Forensic Science, International Business, Marine Sciences, and Homeland Security and Emergency Management. SSU hosts one of only 15 Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps (NROTC) units at an HBCU. Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, the university and its research programs regularly attract major grants from federal agencies and private institutions. www.savannahstate.edu

Savannah Technical College (STC): Savannah Technical College serves Coastal Georgia with quality, market-driven technical education with campus locations in Chatham, Effingham and Liberty Counties. Serving more than 10,000 credit and non-credit students annually, Savannah Tech offers nearly 150 different instructional programs in Aviation Technology, Business and Professional Services, Industrial Technology, and Health Sciences in addition to Adult Education classes, industry-specific training and continuing education. The College serves as an economic and community development partner for the region, offering corporate and customized training and assessment programs for business and industry. Savannah Technical College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award the associate degree, diplomas, and technical certificates of credit. For more information, contact 1866 Southern Lane Decatur, GA 30033, by calling 404-679-4500, or by visiting SACSCOC's website (www.sacscoc.org).

Saint Leo University: Founded in 1889, Saint Leo offers several programs at its Savannah Education Center. According to *U.S. News & World Report*, Saint Leo has been named one of the best regional colleges in the South, and it is an accredited top Catholic university in the nation. The Savannah campus offers an Associate Degree program for Arts, Bachelor's Degree programs for both Arts and Sciences, and Master's for Sciences and Business Administration. www.saintleo.edu

South University: South University's Savannah campus dates from 1899, when Dr. John Draughon established Draughon's Practical Business College in Savannah. A four-year institution accredited by SACS, it offers associate's, bachelor's, master's and Doctoral degree programs in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Health Professions, Business, and Nursing. Several locations are established in the nation alongside accessible, fully online degree programs as well. southuniversity.edu

Several additional institutions of higher learning have opened advanced degree and certificate programs in metro Savannah:

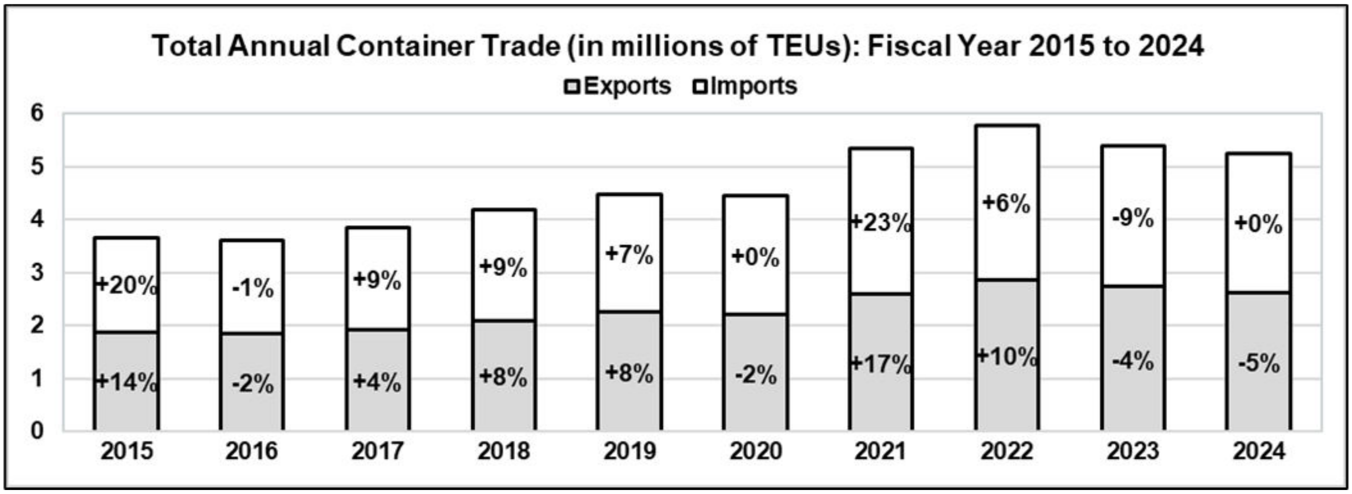
- **Embry-Riddle** offers associate, bachelor's, and master's degrees in management of technical operations, aircraft maintenance, aviation maintenance management and professional aeronautics. Their Savannah campus, located near Pooler, is the world's pre-eminent university for aviation and aerospace education. www.erau.edu
- **Strayer University** campus in Savannah opened on November 19, 2008 and provides undergraduate and graduate degree programs in high-demand fields: accounting, business, criminal justice, education, general studies, health services administration, information systems and public administration. www.strayer.edu/georgia/savannah
- **Columbia College** has campuses open at Hunter Army Airfield and Ft. Stewart. Columbia College is a private, nonprofit institution accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. It provides associate and bachelor degree programs to military personnel and working adults. www.ccis.edu

Infrastructure: Port of Savannah / Georgia Ports Authority

Georgia's deep water ports and inland barge terminals support nearly 561,000 jobs throughout the state annually and contributes $140 billion in revenue and $3.8 billion in state and local taxes to Georgia's economy.

The Port of Savannah
The Port of Savannah is the largest single container terminal in the Western Hemisphere. In FY2024 it moved 5.25 million TEUs (Twenty Foot Equivalent Container Units), a decrease of 2.3% when compared to the previous year.

The Port of Savannah moved 22.0% of the East Coast container trade. The port handled 11.6% of all U.S. containerized exports in FY2024 (PIERS-Enterprise).



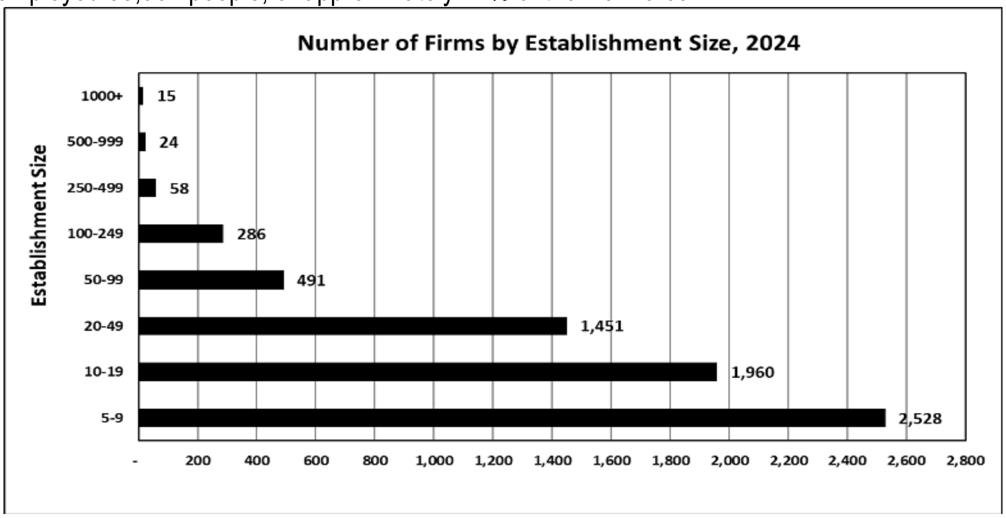
The Port of Savannah offers its customers many advantages:

- The most global container services among U.S. Southeast & Gulf ports
- Transit times as low as 26 days from Asia and 12 days from Europe
- GPA is owner & operator of the largest single-terminal container facility (Garden City) in the U.S. which also features the longest contiguous dock in the U.S. of nearly 10,000 linear feet
- Largest Southeast refrigerated container import-export terminal
- One-of-a-kind intermodal infrastructure located on a single terminal served by CSX Transportation & Norfolk Southern Railroad
- Inspection offices for U.S. Customs & Border Protection, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife are on-terminal
- Immediate access to two major interstate highways – I-95 (North/South) and I-16 (East/West)
- Largest concentration of retail import distribution centers (DCs) along the East Coast
- Customer Service Center – one-stop customer solutions group for all port users

For More Information contact the Georgia Ports Authority, www.gaports.com. (912) 964-3855 or (800) 342-8012

Infrastructure: Small Business Investment & Development

Savannah's thriving small business community accounts for a substantial share of total private employment in the Savannah-Hinesville-Statesboro CSA. The Georgia Department of Labor reported a total of 6,774 establishments employing between 5 and 500 employees in the second quarter of 2024. An additional 10,208 firms employed less than 5 employees. Firms with less than 500 workers employ 196,053 people, or approximately 78% of the workforce. The remaining 36 firms with more than 500 employees employed 55,964 people, or approximately 22% of the workforce.



Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Georgia Labor Market Explorer, Area Labor Profile, Accessed 12/11/2024.

Several state and local agencies work to strengthen the viability of small businesses, providing assistance that may range from free consulting to training, networking to loans, and other essential small business tools. They promote Savannah's healthy small business climate with doors always open to assist the region's innovators and entrepreneurs.

University of Georgia Small Business Development Center: The UGA SBDC's mission is to enhance the economic well-being of Georgians by providing a wide range of educational services for aspiring entrepreneurs. They provide tools, training and resources to help small businesses grow and succeed. The SBDC has 18 offices ranging from Rome to Valdosta to serve the needs of Georgia's business community. For more information, visit https://www.georgiasbdc.org

Small Business Assistance Corporation: SBAC is a Community Development Financial Institution licensed by the U.S. Small Business Administration, contracted by Georgia's Department of Community Affairs, and supported by the City of Savannah. SBAC promotes small business development through financing, technical, and loan assistance programs for new and existing businesses. For more information, visit www.sbacsav.com.

The Creative Coast: Creative Coast provides mentoring and support to help build the creative economy of the Savannah region. Through education and social programs that connect local innovation in both large and small companies, Creative Coast fosters the creative technology and entrepreneurial ecosystem. They strive to make an economic impact on the region through the creation of high-wage, high-tech and creative jobs. For more information visit www.thecreativecoast.org

Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce: The Chamber's Small Business Council was created to provide small businesses with resources they can utilize to help their businesses grow. The Chamber strives to provide a voice and venue for those members through the Small Business Council. The Council holds events to allow networking and optimum exposure for small businesses on a monthly basis. For more information, visit www.savannahchamber.com.

Savannah Economic Development Authority: SEDA leads the **Business Retention Action Team**, who work with existing businesses on issues from management and human resources, to training, exporting and operations. SEDA offers customized services to help business development, providing the resources needed including workforce training programs, infrastructure, available properties, incentives, tax abatements, utilities, permitting and more. For more information, visit www.seda.org.

Infrastructure: Taxes

Savannah-Chatham County / Georgia Tax Summary

Georgia maintains its modest tax rates via a fiscally conservative government, a constitutionally mandated balanced budget and a pro-business climate. Georgia is rated as the #1 state for business 11 years in a row by *Area Development* magazine.

Real and Personal Property Tax

Taxes on real and tangible personal property are levied by the city, county, school district, and some municipalities. The Chatham Area Transit Authority levies a small tax in the City of Savannah, unincorporated Chatham County, and small parts of Garden City. Georgia law requires that the fair market value be determined on all property to be taxed. Millage rates are applied to the assessed value, which is 40% of the fair market value. Owner-occupied homes are allowed a homestead exemption; Chatham County has a homestead valuation freeze exemption. The following table shows how to calculate the taxable value (net assessed value) of an owner-occupied home:

$ 340,100	Fair Market Value of Residence (2024 Median sale price in Chatham County)
x .40	40% Assessment Ratio
$ 136,040	Assessed Value
- $ 10,000	Homestead Valuation Freeze Exemption (example)
$ 126,040	Net Assessed Value

2024 Millage Rates (1)

Unincorporated Chatham County	
State of Georgia	0.000
Public Schools	17.481
County M&O*	10.518
Special Service District* & Transit	4.502 1.056
Add Other Municipality	****see tables on right**
Total	**33.557**

City of Savannah	
State of Georgia	0.000
Public Schools	17.481
City	12.200
County M&O	10.518
Chatham Transit	1.056
Total	**41.255**

Other Municipalities**	
Bloomingdale	0.0
Garden City	2.495
Pooler	3.780
Port Wentworth	5.216
Thunderbolt	5.379
Tybee Island	3.542
Vernonburg	0.0

(1) From the Georgia Department of Revenue, https://www.chathamcountyga.gov/Government/PropertyTaxRates

*If you live in one of the municipalities listed in the table above, use the Unincorporated Chatham County tax rates, eliminate the Special Service District rate and add the municipality's rate into your calculations. Add the Transit rate of 1.056 if the area is served by CAT.

Continuing with our example above, a $340,100 home with a homestead valuation freeze exemption of $10,000 would have a net assessed value of $126,040. In unincorporated Chatham County (not in a municipality), this home would have a 2024 property tax of $126,040 x .033557, which is $4,230. The same home located in the City of Savannah would have property taxes of $5,200.

The City of Savannah provides services such as trash removal and recycling, and water and sewer to city residents, while county residents pay for these services separately. Chatham County residential property owners benefit from a homestead valuation freeze exemption, which effectively raises the homestead exemption the same amount that the property appreciates. There is no increase in residential property taxes until the sale of the property, at which point a new basis is established.

Some find it useful to compare real and personal property taxes using an Effective Tax Rate per $1,000 of fair market value. To find this rate, divide the property tax on the home listed above by its fair market value, which in this case is $340,100, then multiply the answer by $1,000. Unincorporated Chatham County has an Effective Tax Rate of $12.44 per $1,000 of fair market value, while the City of Savannah has an Effective Tax Rate of $15.29 per $1,000 of fair market value.

Sales Tax: 7% on the dollar on purchases of all goods and utilities (4% state + 2% local option + 1% Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax). Food items are exempt from state sales tax, but subject to county taxes of 3% (2% local option + 1% Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax).

Sales Tax Exemptions: Apply to manufacturing machinery used directly in making products for sale, machinery and equipment used for pollution control, raw materials that will become a component of a finished product, packaging materials, certain computer equipment, and standard software. Parts to repair airplanes are also exempt from sales taxes as of 2014. A full listing of sales and use tax exemptions in Georgia can be found at: https://dor.georgia.gov/2021-list-sales-and-use-tax-exemptions.

Hotel/Motel Room Tax: Chatham County: 8%, with the total tax for rooms 15% (7% sales tax plus 8% lodging tax). Tybee Island: 7%, with the total tax for rooms 14% (7% sales tax plus 7% lodging tax).

Personal Income Tax: State of Georgia

Single:	$230 on first $7,000 plus 5.75% of the amount over $7,000
Married:	$340 on first $10,000 plus 5.75% of the amount over $10,000
Married filing separately:	$170 on first $5,000 plus 5.75% of the amount over $5,000

State Taxes: Georgia does not have a unitary tax. Businesses are taxed only on income apportioned to Georgia.

Corporate Income Tax: Corporations that own property, do business in Georgia, or receive income from Georgia sources are subject to corporate income tax. As of 2024, the rate of taxation is 5.39% of a corporation's Georgia taxable net income. The tax calculation is based entirely on gross receipts earned in Georgia, the first southeastern state to adopt the Single Factor Gross Receipts formula.

Corporate Net Worth Tax: This tax is based on the net worth of a corporation. Corporations may have to pay a net worth tax levied in exchange for the privilege of doing business or exercising a corporate franchise in Georgia. For net worth years beginning on or after January 1, 2018 (those reported on the 2017 income tax return), corporations with a net worth of $100,000 or less are not subject to tax but must file a return. The maximum is $5,000 for net worth in excess of $22 million.

Unemployment Insurance: Georgia’s unemployment insurance for newly liable employers averages 2.7% of each employee’s first $9,500 in earnings, with a maximum weekly benefit of $365 effective as of July 1, 2019. After an employment record is established in Georgia (36 months), a new rate based on employee separations is developed.

Worker’s Compensation: Georgia law requires employers to insure their workers against job connected accidents. This insurance is carried with private companies unless the employer self-insures. Self-insured employers must be certified by the State Workers’ Compensation Board. Private insurance companies return about 1% of the premiums received from employers to the board to cover its operating costs, and self-insured employers pay the board a fee (about 1% of estimated premiums) to cover these costs. A company is eligible for a 7.5% reduction in rates if it operates as a certified drug-free workplace. Recipients will receive two-thirds of their average weekly wage, but not more than $800 per week for an accident which occurred on or after July 1, 2023.

Business and Occupation Tax:
Every for-profit business in the City of Savannah and Chatham County must pay a local business or occupation tax based upon gross receipts or profitability classification. The city of Savannah profitability classes range from $0.69 per $1,000 for Class A to $1.19 per $1,000 for Class F. City of Savannah’s minimum tax is $85 per year. Maximum is $21,674 for a business with gross receipts in excess of $50 million. For Chatham County, profitability classes range from $0.47 per $1,000 for Class A to $0.97 per $1,000 for Class F. The County tax table reflects an $82 minimum and a $9,775 maximum. The city or county tax table determines the exact tax amount.

Sources: Savannah Economic Development Authority, Georgia Department of Labor, Georgia Department of Revenue. Revised 12/06/24

Infrastructure: Transportation – Roads, Rail, Water and Air

CAT Local Transit Service Expedites Travel

Chatham Area Transit Authority's fixed-route, paratransit, and ferry services provided 2.0 million trips during 2023. CAT operates 47 buses on 17 fixed bus routes. CAT's service area covers 438 square miles and a population of nearly 300,000. Route 14 Abercorn is CAT's most productive route. The one-way fare on CAT's fixed routes is $1.50, which includes free transfers between routes up to 90 minutes. A day pass is $3, a weekly CAT card is $14, and a monthly CAT card is $50. CAT provides half-price fares to individuals with disabilities, youths, older adults aged 65+ and honorably discharged veterans. In March 2021, CAT launched a mobile ticketing service that allows customers to purchase and download digital tickets using their smart phones. CAT's fare-free shuttle called the Dot is comprised of two loops that run throughout Savannah's downtown Historic District, connecting visitor centers, parking facilities, attractions, shops, restaurants, and hotels. More information is available at www.catchacat.org, or contact Chatham Area Transit Authority at (912) 233-5767.

Water Ferry

The fare-free Savannah Belles Ferry system, which is connected to the fare-free downtown CAT shuttle, provides daily service between the north and south banks of the Savannah River. The ferry arrives and departs from the City Hall dock on River Street, the Waving Girl Landing at the Savannah Marriott Riverfront, and on Hutchinson Island at the Savannah International Trade & Convention Center located adjacent to The Westin Savannah Harbor Resort and Spa. The ferry operates every 20-30 minutes from 7:00am until 10:00pm, seven days a week, subject to weather and traffic conditions. Service to the Waving Girl Landing is scheduled less often. For more information, contact Savannah Belles Ferry at 912-447-4029 or www.catchacat.org.

Coastal Regional Coaches

This ten-county, on-demand shuttle service is part of Georgia's regional rural public transport program providing residents of Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, Long, McIntosh, and Screven counties with regional transportation. The service is available for traveling from or to a rural destination and accommodates all transportation needs within the service area. At least one day's prior notice is required to reserve a trip, and fares are assessed on a per-passenger basis depending on destination. For more information and to make a reservation visit www.coastalrc.ga.gov/transportation.

Bus Service to Destinations throughout North America

Savannah has a station on Greyhound Lines, Inc. whose bus routes link riders to nearly 2,300 destinations across the United States, Canada and Mexico. Greyhound provides scheduled passenger service, charter bus service, package express delivery, and food outlets within its terminals. Greyhound has more than 20 daily arrivals and departures out of the Savannah Station. For more information, contact Greyhound Bus Lines at 912-232-2135 or 1-800-231-2222 or www.greyhound.com.

Passenger Rail to New York and Miami

Amtrak's Silver Service/Palmetto Train offers daily service from Savannah to New York, Washington, DC, Charleston, Jacksonville, Orlando, Tampa, and Miami. Silver Service trains provide options for dining and sleeping arrangements. The Palmetto offers Business Class Service which grants passengers exclusive experiences. For rates and schedules call 800-USA-RAIL or go to www.amtrak.com.

Freight Service at the Port of Savannah

Both CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern transport goods to and from the Port of Savannah. The second portion of the Port of Savannah's Mason Mega Rail Terminal is now in operation, increasing intermodal capacity at the port by more than 30%. The 85-acre Mason Mega Rail Terminal is the largest on-terminal intermodal facility in North America. For more information contact CSX at 904-359-3100 (www.csx.com) or Norfolk Southern Corp. at 855-667-3655 (www.nscorp.com).

Taxi Service

Savannah taxi services are readily available at the airport and most major hotels. The Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport posts information on the city's taxi cab fare system at www.savannahairport.com/transportation

Point to point estimates of taxi fares in Savannah may be found at http://www.taxifarefinder.com

Air Transportation

Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport

A 15-minute drive from Historic Downtown Savannah, the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport is at the center of a transportation and logistics infrastructure that includes a global port alongside access to more than 100 motor carriers, three railroads, numerous ocean-shipping lines and Foreign Trade Zone 104, which serves a growing number of customers within this network. Businesses continue to choose Savannah to centralize their operations on the East Coast putting them in a superior position to handle future activity. Unparalleled service paired with exceptional operations helped land Savannah's international airport as the #1 best airport in the U.S. by Condé Nast Traveler.

Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport Affected by Recession: Passenger and Cargo Activity

Year-end Totals	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2023-2024 Change
Passengers (Enplanements+Deplanements)	2,629,160	3,021,077	1,199,995	2,780,909	3,533,294	3,933,285	4,111,936	5.5%
Cargo Freight/Express/Mail, tons	8,635	9,249	8,459	8,781	8,402	8,737	13,749	50.8%
Aircraft Operations	96,823	107,764	92,294	112,657	116,320	112,004	112,004	2.1%

Source: Savannah Airport Commission, www.savannahairport.com 12/13/2024. Data for 2024 is based on data through November.

Passenger count data 2024 is approximately higher by 5.5% from 2023. Aircraft Operations increased 2.1% from 2023. Cargo Year-end Total increased 51% as a result of UPS increasing cargo capacity by upgrading its flight operation between Savannah and Louisville to the Boeing 757. Ten airlines provide direct nonstop flights to major U.S. cities, providing convenient travel options. As of December 2024, Delta held 30% of the market share at the airport. American Airlines is second with 25%, followed by Southwest (16%), United Airlines (16%), JetBlue (5%), and Allegiant (5%).

Airline Flight Schedules

Airline	Number	Destination		
Allegiant	1-702-505-8888	Akron Appleton* Baltimore Bellville* Punta Gorda/Fort Myers	Chicago* Cincinnati Columbus Fort Lauderdale Pittsburgh	Grand Rapids* Indianapolis* Louisville* Newark
American Airlines	1-800-433-7300	Charlotte Dallas/Fort Worth	Miami Philadelphia	Washington, D.C
Avelo Airlines	1-346-616-9500	New Haven*		
Breeze	www.flyBreeze.com	Hartford*	Providence*	Westchester*
Delta Air Lines	1-800-221-1212	Atlanta Boston*	Minneapolis/St. Paul* New York - LaGuardia	New York - JFK Detroit
Frontier	www.flyFrontier.com	Philadelphia*	Cleveland	
JetBlue	1-800-538-2583	New York - JFK	Boston	
Southwest	1-800-435-9792	Baltimore Chicago	Dallas Denver	Houston Nashville
Sun Country Airlines	1-800-359-6786	Minneapolis/St. Paul*		
United	1-800-241-6522	Chicago Denver	Houston Newark	Washington, D.C.

* Seasonal service.
See https://savannahairport.com/flights/airlines/ for updates.

Infrastructure: Utilities

Water and Sanitary Sewer Services

The City of Savannah's Water Resources Division provides potable water, wastewater treatment, and stormwater services for businesses and residents within the city and much of Chatham County. It operates the Industrial and Domestic surface water potable water treatment plant, the only one in Coastal Georgia, with a 58 million gallon per day permitted capacity to meet the existing development needs in the Savannah metropolitan area, and a high service pump station to serve surrounding municipalities all facing mandated ground water reductions, as is the City of Savannah. In addition, the Department operates six independent groundwater systems with 48 deep wells and a 97 million gallon (MG) raw water reservoir. The Department supplies for domestic, industrial and fire demands and maintains over 1,100 miles of water distribution main, over 7,000 fire hydrants, over 18,250 valves and supplies over 80,000 individual water service connections. Through intergovernmental agreements, the Department also supplies water to other municipalities in Chatham County and portions of Effingham County.

Sanitary sewer collection and treatment is provided throughout the city and portions of unincorporated Chatham County. In addition, the sanitary sewer system treats sanitary sewage for other municipalities through intergovernmental agreements, along with upcoming sewer service to Bryan County and the new Hyundai Metaplant.

The Department's wastewater treatment capacity, currently 35.5 million gallons per day (MGD) with near future to be 39.5 million gallons per day, is sufficient to meet the requirements of anticipated growth. The wastewater system includes over 740 miles of gravity sewer mains, over 125 miles of sewer force mains, 18,000 manholes, over 215 lift (pump) stations, and serves approximately 75,000 sewer laterals. The wastewater (e.g. water reclamation) treatment plants include the following:

President Street Water Reclamation Plant	27 MGD maximum capacity
Wilshire/Windsor Water Reclamation Plant	4.5 MGD maximum capacity
Georgetown Water Reclamation Plant	1.42 MGD maximum capacity
Crossroads Water Reclamation Plant	4.5 MGD maximum capacity
New - Travis Field Water Reclamation Plant	4.0 MGD maximum capacity

The Department manages wastewater Pre-Treatment, FOG (Fats, Oils, and Grease), and Pre-Treatment Programs. The President Street Water Reclamation Plant, the Windsor/Wilshire Water Reclamation Plant, and the Crossroads Water Reclamation Plant treat an average of 19 MGD to 27 MGD, and 2.5 MGD to 4.5 MGD respectively, within the City limits which is enough to serve the city. Portions of unincorporated Chatham County are also served by the City of Savannah sanitary sewer collection and treatment system. The Stormwater Department runs pumps stations and manages 5 detention ponds, 460 miles of closed and 160 miles of open stormwater conveyance system. For more information, visit www.savannahga.gov.

Natural Gas

Georgians receive competitive pricing for natural gas service with this deregulated industry. The natural gas marketers that operate in Georgia deliver their product through a natural gas pipeline system operated by the Atlanta Gas Light Company, subsidiary of Southern Company, which is responsible for repairing leaks and responding to other gas emergencies. The latest survey of gas prices for each marketer is available on the Public Service Commission's website at https://psc.ga.gov/utilities/natural-gas/marketers-pricing-index/.

Electricity

Georgia Power is the largest electric subsidiary of Southern Company (NYSE: SO), America's premier energy company. Value, Reliability, Customer Service and Stewardship are the cornerstones of the company's promise to 2.7 million customers in all but four of Georgia's 159 counties. Committed to delivering clean, safe, reliable and affordable energy, Georgia Power maintains a diverse, innovative generation mix that includes nuclear, coal and natural gas, as well as renewables such as solar, hydroelectric and wind. Georgia Power focuses on delivering world-class service to its customers every day and the company is recognized by J.D. Power as an industry leader in customer satisfaction. For more information, visit www.GeorgiaPower.com and connect with the company on Facebook (Facebook.com/GeorgiaPower), X (X.com/GeorgiaPower) and Instagram (Instagram.com/ga_power). Businesses with a load of 900 kW or more frequently can choose their electricity supplier in Georgia. Electric membership corporations in the Savannah area are listed at www.georgiaemc.com [georgiaemc.com]

Workforce Development Resources

Program and Initiatives

Workforce development is a top priority in Savannah. Strong academics and technical skills, coupled with lifelong learning within a workplace context are the key for students to have a productive future. Here are a few of the programs that strengthen education and training by providing apprenticeships, internships, job shadows, partnerships or character development.

Junior Achievement of Georgia, Coastal Region
Craig Tootle, Director of Development and Volunteer Partnerships
11935 Abercorn Street Savannah, Georgia 31419
P: (912) 428-8331; ctootle@georgia.ja.org
Population Served: K-12
Services: Inspiring and preparing young people to succeed in a global economy.

Youth Apprenticeship
Ronald Aikens, Workbase Learning Coordinator, Savannah-Chatham County Public School System
402 Market Street, Savannah, GA 31408, P: (912) 395-6765; ronald.aikens@sccpss.com
Population Served: Students, businesses and educators in Chatham County.
Services: Provides an opportunity for juniors and seniors to start preparing for a career while still in high school. Students who have completed courses related to a career work an apprenticeship. Youth Apprenticeship enables employers to play an active role in shaping the quality of their future workforce.

Learning for Life; Exploring
Barbara Foley, Program Director, 11900 Abercorn Street, Savannah, GA 31419
P: (912) 308-7892; Barbara.foley@scouting.org
Population Served: Savannah-Chatham County Public School System K-12 students
Services: Career and character education, school-business partnership development.

WorkSource Coastal
7216 Skidaway Road, Suite A, Savannah, GA 31406, P: (912) 351-6379; http://worksourcecoastal.org/
Population Served: Eligible adults and youths in Region 12 (Bryan, Bulloch, Camden, Chatham, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, Long, McIntosh and Screven counties) under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act legislation of 2014.
Services: Develop workforce education and training strategies, create partnerships, and ensure universal access through "One-Stop" centers. Programs include Adult, Dislocated worker and Youth Program, and On-the-Job-Training.

Step Up: Chatham Apprentice Program (CAP)
Tanika Rivers, CAP Program Manager, 428 Bull St. Savannah, GA 31401
P: (912) 232-6747; Trivers@stepupsavannah.org; Fax: (912) 401-0341; https://stepupsavannah.org/workforce-development/
Population Served: 17+
Services: Helps unemployed Chatham County residents create career paths that offer opportunities for advancement.

Goodwill of Southeast Georgia
Melanie Goodwin, Mission Compliance & Advancement Manager, 7220 Sallie Mood Drive, Savannah, GA 31406
P: (912) 446-1605; mgoodwin@goodwillsega.org; https://goodwillsega.org/jobs-training/opportunity-centers/
Population Served: People with disabilities and other barriers to employment
Services: The Opportunity Center provides individual support, meaningful training, and employment assistance with intensive wrap-around services, skills assessments and development including Google digital skills, tuition free-certifications, and connections to employers.

Inspiritus Refugee and Immigrant Employment Services
6555 Abercorn St., Suite 205 Savannah, GA 31405
P: (404) 875-0201; Fax: (678) 252-9782; https://weinspirit.org/savannah
Population Served: Refugees, asylees, and immigrants at any point in their journey

Services: Integrated programs for job readiness and placement, financial services, and income support.

AREA CHAMBER

VISIT
SAVANNAH
EST. 1733

SAVANNAHCHAMBER.COM
VISITSAVANNAH.COM

101 EAST BAY STREET • SAVANNAH, GA 31401
P.O. BOX 1628 31402-1628
912.644.6400 • 912.644.6499