



MEMORANDUM

TO: City Council
FROM: Joseph A. Melder, City Manager
DATE: May 28, 2025
SUBJECT: 2033 Strategic Initiative – ‘Vision 2033’ Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide City Council with an overview of the ‘2033 Strategic Initiative’ Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA), which was approved by Chatham County’s Board of Commissioners on February 7, 2025, followed by the approval of the Savannah Economic Development Authority on February 11, 2025.

Background

The ‘2033 Strategic Initiative’ involves a collaboration between Chatham County, Savannah Economic Development Authority, and community partners to facilitate and fund a comprehensive community and growth management plan. Vision 2033 will focus collectively on the following areas in recognition of the 300th anniversary of the City of Savannah:

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| - Housing | - Environmental Protection |
| - Education | - Zoning and Density |
| - Healthcare | - Infrastructure |
| - Land-Use Policy | - Transportation |
| - Resiliency | - Economic Development |
| - Stormwater Management | |

The plan was previously presented to City Council at an October 27, 2022, City Council Workshop meeting.

Funding

The ‘2033 Strategic Initiative’s’ budget includes \$1 million from Chatham County, \$1 million from the City of Savannah, \$250,000 from the Savannah Economic Development Authority, and \$750,000 from community and private sector partners. The total project budget of \$3 million will be allocated to hiring a professional consultant who will build upon all existing plans, coordinate approaches, engage with the community, conduct fact-finding analysis, publish a plan with clear goals and benchmarks, and allocate start-up funds for the implementation of recommendations.

City of Savannah Funding

The 2033 Strategic Initiative received funding from the City Council through two allocations of \$500,000 each in FY 2020 and FY 2021 budgets, amounting to a total of \$1 million, which is currently held in an account. The distribution of these funds necessitates the execution of an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA). The Chatham County Board of Commissioners approved the attached IGA on February 7, 2025, followed by the approval of the Savannah Economic Development Authority on February 11, 2025.

Board Composition

The Board of Directors of the ‘Strategic Initiative 2033 Inc.’, as outlined in the IGA, includes the following:

- (1) Chairman of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners

- (1) An at-large appointment by the Chatham County Board of Commissioners
- (1) Mayor of the City of Savannah
- (1) An at-large appointment of the Mayor and Alderman of the City of Savannah
- (1) Chair of the Savannah Economic Development Authority
- (1) Appointment by the Savannah Airport Commission
- (1) Chair of the Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
- (4) Additional board appointments from contributions to the plan along with an appointment process within the organizational by-laws.

The Savannah City Manager and the Chatham County Manager will serve as ex officio board members.

Next Steps

1. Please review the attached '2033 Strategic Initiative' IGA and let me know if you have any questions.
2. This IGA will require City Council consideration and is being prepared for the June 12, 2025, City Council agenda.

Attachments

- 10.27.2022 City Council Workshop Presentation 'Vision 2033'
- 2033 Strategic Initiative: Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA)

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR THE 2033 STRATEGIC INITIATIVE

This Intergovernmental Agreement is made and entered into as of February 7, 2025, by and between the Board of Commissioners of Chatham County (hereinafter “County”), a political subdivision of the State of Georgia; Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah (hereinafter “City”), a municipal corporation existing under the laws of the State of Georgia; and the Savannah Economic Development Authority (hereinafter “SEDA”), a public authority created by the Constitution of the State of Georgia.

RECITALS:

WHEREAS, County, City and SEDA, along with numerous private-sector partners, agree to facilitate and fund the preparation of the *2033 Strategic Initiative* as a community plan in recognition of the 300th anniversary of the settlement of Savannah in 1733; and

WHEREAS, despite many advances, the community needs a growth management strategy that will collect data, gather community input and formulate advancement plans in the following areas: economic development, resiliency, environmental protection, stormwater management, transportation, infrastructure, transit, housing, education, healthcare, land use policy, zoning and density; and

WHEREAS, the *2033 Strategic Initiative* will be based on comprehensive fact-finding, through inclusive community engagement to accomplish a written plan with clearly identified goals and future measures of achievement. Some work is underway—such as individual state-mandated comprehensive plans, work of the Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition – Chatham Community Blueprint, Chatham 2040 and Mayor of Savannah’s various Task Forces. Yet, other work must begin and become sustained to overcome the lack of an across-the-community approach to reach an all-encompassing community initiative; and

WHEREAS, preparation of the plan will require the coordination of many community outreach meetings, and input throughout and within the community, including residents, neighborhood associations, the business community, and the participation of critical community partners including the Georgia Ports Authority, public and private schools, major employers, small businesses, the Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport, the Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Leadership Council, health care providers, and many others; and

WHEREAS, the project’s budget, including the cost of professional consultants to undertake the fact-finding, engage the community, promulgate the community-engagement process, draft and publish a plan with goals and benchmarks for future community measurement, and start-up funds for recommendations, is estimated at approximately Three Million Dollars (\$3,000,000).

WITNESSETH:

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the mutual promises contained herein, County, City and SEDA agree as follows:

1. County. County agrees to the recitals as stated and the purpose of the *2033 Strategic Initiative*.
 - 1.1. County agrees to the plan that Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc. will become organized as a non-profit organization, will be duly qualified by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service under Section 501(c)(3), and will manage the development, preparation and publication of the *2033 Strategic Initiative*.
 - 1.2. County agrees to the plan that the Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc. will be composed of 11 board members, including the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Chatham County or his designee, and one at-large appointment as appointed by the Board of Commissioners. The County Manager, or his designee from County staff, will serve ex officio.
 - 1.3. County agrees to fund One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) to develop, prepare and publish the *2033 Strategic Plan*.
 - 1.4. County agrees to pay One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to SEDA within 30 days of the execution of this Intergovernmental Agreement; agrees to pay Four Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$400,000) to SEDA within 90 days from the execution of this Agreement; and Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000) to SEDA on or before July 1, 2025.
2. City. City agrees to the recitals as stated and the purpose of the *2033 Strategic Initiative*.
 - 2.1. City agrees to the plan that that Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc. will become organized as a non-profit organization, will be duly qualified by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service under Section 501(c)(3), and will manage the development, preparation and publication of the *2033 Strategic Initiative*.
 - 2.2. City agrees to the plan that the Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033 Inc., will be composed of 11 board members, including the Mayor of the City of Savannah, or his designee, and one at-large appointment as appointed by the Mayor and Aldermen. The City Manager, or his designee from City staff, will serve ex officio.
 - 2.3. City agrees to pay One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) to develop, prepare and publish the *2033 Strategic Initiative*.
 - 2.4. City agrees to pay One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to SEDA within 30 days of the execution of this Intergovernmental Agreement; agrees to pay Four Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$400,000) to SEDA within 90 days from the execution of this Agreement; and Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000) to SEDA on or before July 1, 2025.
3. SEDA. SEDA agrees to the recitals as stated and the purpose of the *2033 Strategic Initiative*.
 - 3.1. SEDA agrees to the plan that Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc., will become organized as a non-profit organization, will be duly qualified by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service

- under Section 501(c)(3), and will manage the development, preparation and publication of the *2033 Strategic Initiative*.
- 3.2. SEDA agrees to create a restricted banking account for receipt of funds for the *2033 Strategic Initiative* and agrees to collect and disburse funds in accordance with this Intergovernmental Agreement, including receiving designated funding from the County and City as well as the agreed-upon payments by SEDA.
 - 3.3. SEDA agrees to the plan that the Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc. will be composed of 11 board members, including SEDA's Chair, or her designee.
 - 3.4. SEDA agrees to provide initial administrative support, including office space, desk, computer, telephone, office supplies and copying services, but excluding use of any SEDA staff, for up to 120 days during the initial start-up of the *2033 Strategic Initiative*.
 - 3.5. SEDA agrees to create a restricted bank account with a financial institution in Chatham County for purposes of receiving funds from the City, County and SEDA and will keep records of all funds received and disbursements until the completed organization of the Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033.
 - 3.6. SEDA agrees that after receiving a written request from the Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc., SEDA will disburse to the Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc. the amount of the requested funds from the restricted bank account along with a ledger of expenses to date and their purpose.
 - 3.7. SEDA agrees to fund Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000) to develop, prepare and publish the *2033 Strategic Plan*. SEDA's funding of Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000) will be contingent upon the contribution of funding of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) each from the City and County as confirmed by the execution of this Agreement.
 - 3.8. SEDA agrees to pay Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) into the restricted account within 30 days of the execution of this Intergovernmental Agreement; agrees to pay into the restricted account One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) within 90 days of the execution of this Agreement; and agreed to pay into the restricted account One Hundred and Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000) on or before July 1, 2025.
4. County, City and SEDA. County, City and SEDA agree as partners to create Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc., for purposes to help develop, help create and publish the *2033 Strategic Initiative*, to set up a governance structure to implement the *2033 Strategic Initiative* and to oversee its recommendations, and to form a Community Advisory Board to ensure comprehensive community participation and offer technical advice.
- 4.1. The 11 members of the Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc. will be designated, as follows: the Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of Chatham County or his designee; one at-large appointment as appointed by the Board of Commissioners; the Mayor of the City of Savannah or his designee; one at-large appointment as appointed by the Mayor and Aldermen; SEDA's Chair, or her designee; Chairman of the Savannah Airport Commission or his designee; and Chairman of the Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce, or his designee. The County Manager and City Manager will serve as ex officio members.
 - 4.2. Besides the designation of seven members of the Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc., the Board will approve four Board appointments from the other donors who contribute \$100,000 or more toward the \$3 million budget. The

- appointment process will be included with the organizational by-laws of the Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc.
- 4.3. The Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc. will approve a set of by-laws that will govern the organization, authorize the execution of contracts necessary to conduct its business affairs, adopt an annual budget, oversee and manage the consultant's work on the *2033 Strategic Initiative*, accept funds and authorize payments, including donations from private interests, follow the requirements of Georgia's *Open Records* and *Open Meetings* laws and ensure all work remains on task and on schedule and with community inclusion.
 - 4.4. Notwithstanding funding obligations of the County, City and SEDA as provided in previous paragraphs, totaling \$2.25 million, funding from the County, City and SEDA will be contingent upon either payment or commitment of private and other public sector funding of \$1 million.
 - 4.5. The Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc. will award the contract for consulting services to undertake the *2033 Strategic Initiative* through adherence to procurement laws as promulgated by Georgia Code.
 - 4.6. At its option, the Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033 may employ or contract for the position of an Executive Director for administering the day-to-day responsibilities of the *2033 Strategic Initiative*, drafting a Request for Qualifications for consulting services, planning, and providing updates. Payment for the services of an Executive Director will be from the *2033 Strategic Initiative's* budget and may include other administrative and support staff as approved by the Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc.
 - 4.7. As conditions to the participation of the Savannah Airport Commission, and the Savannah-Hilton Head Airport's importance to the strategic future of this community and region, a section of Strategic Initiative 2033 will: 1) Center on the airport and its interconnectivity to the community and region to ensure adequate and efficient landside access will be maintained as the area around the airport develops; 2) Address and help to ensure that development around the airport remains compatible with safe and efficient airport and flight operations, including airspace protection; and 3) Align with and complement the airport master plan which will be updated in 2025. At its option, the Savannah Airport Commission can appoint its airport planning consultant to the Community Advisory Board.
 - 4.8. The Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033, Inc. will appoint a Community Advisory Committee, which will include a broad cross-section of the community. The intent would be for the advisory committee, to assist in all phases of the development of the plan, with full involvement of citizens, elected officials, the business community and neighborhood associations throughout the county. Among those represented may include, but are not limited to: Representatives from neighborhood associations; chairs from the Mayor's Task Forces; and representatives from other governmental, education and health-care institutions, including but not limited to MPC, Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition, Savannah-Chatham Public Schools, Savannah State University, Georgia Southern University, Savannah Technical College, SCAD, St. Joseph's/Candler Health, Memorial Health, the United Way, NAACP, Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, civic clubs and other similar community non-profit organizations; Chatham

- County Urban Development Authority; and representatives from business and business-related organizations which donate substantial funds to the *2033 Strategic Initiative*.
- 4.9. The Board of Directors of Strategic Initiative 2033 will make a minimum of written quarterly reports to the County, City and SEDA on its progress toward presenting the *2033 Strategic Initiative*, including but not limited to, schedule, its work plan, accomplishment of milestones within its work plan, number of neighborhood and community meetings, and other written information to keep the County, City, SEDA and the community informed about its progress.
5. Successors and Assigns. This Intergovernmental Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties, their respective heirs, legal representatives, successors and permitted assigns.
6. Amendment. Any amendment to this Intergovernmental Agreement will not be binding upon the parties unless such amendment is in writing, duly executed by each of the parties.
7. Controlling Laws: Venue.
- 7.1. Controlling Laws. This Agreement and the provisions contained herein shall be construed, controlled, and interpreted according to the laws of the State of Georgia and all duly adopted ordinances, regulations, and policies of the County and City now in effect and those hereinafter adopted. Unless otherwise specified in this Agreement for particular issues, all ordinances, rules, regulations and policies of the City are applicable.
- 7.2. Venue. The exclusive venue for resolution of any and all claims, controversies, or disputes arising out of or relating to any part of this Agreement, or any breach hereof, shall be Chatham County, Georgia, and the parties agree to submit to the jurisdiction of the federal and state courts situated in Chatham County, Georgia for any such resolution.
8. Notices. All notices that may be or are required to be given to or made by a party to another party in connection with this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be deemed to have been properly given if delivered in person, or sent by overnight commercial courier or by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested, to the addresses set out below, or at such other address as specified by written notice and delivered in accordance herewith,

(SEE NEXT PAGE)

CITY:

Office of the City Manager
Attention: City Manager
2 East Bay Street
Post Office Box 1027
Savannah, Georgia 31402

with copy to:
Office of the City Attorney
Attention: City Attorney
Post Office Box 1027
Savannah, Georgia 31402

COUNTY:

Office of the County Manager
Attention: County Manager
124 Bull Street—Suite 220
Post Office Box 8161
Savannah, Georgia 31412

Office of the County Attorney
Attention: County Attorney
124 Bull Street—Suite 220
Post Office Box 8161
Savannah, Georgia 31412

SEDA:

SEDA
Attention: President and CEO
906 Drayton Street
Savannah, Georgia 31401

Gray, Pannell and Woodward, LLP
Attention: Jon Pannell, SEDA Attorney
323 E. Congress St.
Savannah, Georgia 31401

9. For purposes of this Agreement, the time of actual delivery, as evidenced by a signed receipt therefor, if made in person, or one day after deposit in the ordinary course of business, if by overnight commercial courier, or the date of postmark, if by mail, shall be deemed the date of any notice, demand or delivery. Rejection or other refusal to accept or inability to deliver

because of changed address of which no notice was given shall be deemed to be receipt of such notice, demand or delivery.

10. Time of the Essence. Time is of the essence in complying with the terms, conditions and agreements of this Agreement. Upon any failure of a party to perform in compliance with this Agreement, the other parties will have all rights and remedies afforded to such parties at law or in equity.
11. Entire Agreement. This Agreement contains the entire agreement of the parties with respect to the subject matter hereof and no representations, inducements, promises or agreements, oral or otherwise, between parties and not expressly stated herein, shall be of any force or effect.
12. Number; Gender. Whenever the context so requires, the singular number includes the plural and the plural includes the singular, and the gender of any pronoun includes the other genders.
13. Successors and Assigns. This Agreement shall be binding upon and inure to the benefit of the parties, their respective heirs, legal representatives, successors and permitted assigns.
14. Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in two or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original and all of which together shall constitute one and the same instrument, and it shall not be necessary in making proof of this Agreement or its terms to produce or account for more than one of such counterparts.

[SIGNATURES ON NEXT PAGE]

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, City, County and SEDA have caused this instrument to be executed under seal as of the day and year first above written.

CITY:

THE MAYOR AND ALDERMAN OF THE CITY OF SAVANNAH

By: _____
Jay Melder, City Manager
Council

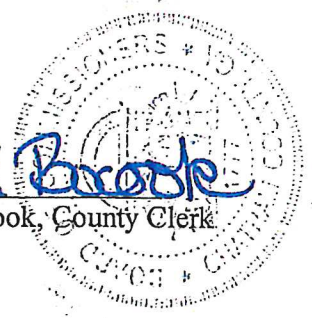
ATTEST: _____
Mark Massey, Clerk of

COUNTY:

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF CHATHAM COUNTY

By: *Chester Ellis*
Chester Ellis, Chairman

ATTEST: *Janice E. Bocook*
Janice Bocook, County Clerk



SEDA:

SAVANNAH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

By: _____
Hugh "Trip" Tollison, President & CEO
Secretary

ATTEST: _____
Mark Sprosty, CFO and



GROWTH MANAGEMENT PLAN - VISION 2033 -

City Council Workshop

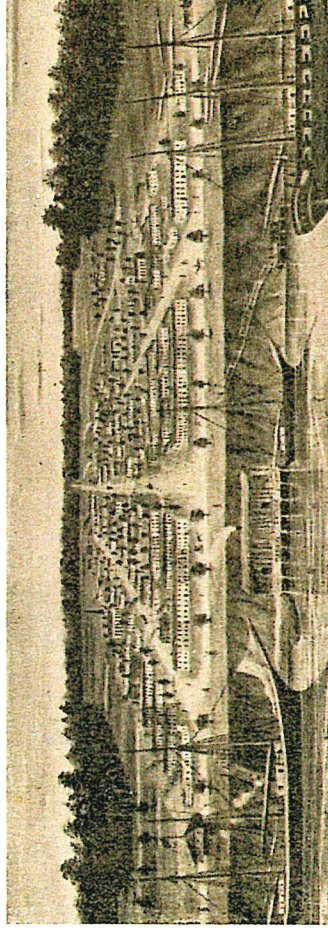
October 27, 2022



VISION 2033

- Approaching the 300th anniversary of the founding of Savannah-Chatham
- Recognized as the first planned city in America
- Focused on strategic planning, community-wide planning, and action initiatives resulting in growth and development of a unique community
- Poised for unprecedented growth and opportunity over the next 10 years

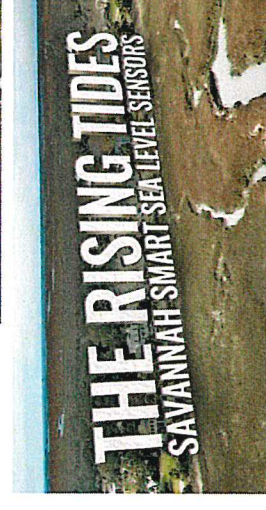
A comprehensive and strategic long-range growth management initiative that will shepherd smart, sustainable growth to benefit all



GHS: Savannah, 1790. Detail from Savannah Savings & Loan Print, 1915. Georgia Historical Society Print Collection, MS 1361PR.

COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGIC GROWTH MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE

- Coastal community
 - Climate change and sea level rise
- Infrastructure
 - Stormwater management and roads
- Housing attainability
- Emerging economic development
 - Hyundai, Mitsubishi, Amazon
 - GA Ports, Gulfstream, tourism, healthcare, higher education
- Increase population for MSA
 - By 2040, population tops 335,000
- Social services



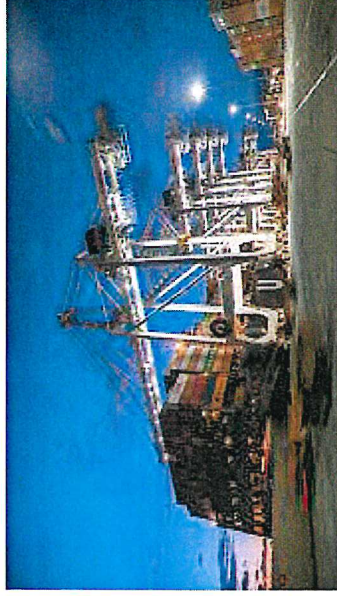
CITY/COUNTY/INDUSTRY FUNDING PARTNERSHIP

- \$1 million approved and allocated by City Council (FY20 & FY21)
- County has committed \$1 million
- Business community has pledged \$1 million



VISION 2033: ADVANCEMENT PLANS & IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

1. Planning
2. Resiliency, Environmental Protection & Stormwater Management
3. Transportation & Infrastructure
4. Housing
5. Economic Development
6. Education & Healthcare





NEXT STEPS



- City will prepare the approved and allocated funding to support the effort
- Agree to pursue Vision 2033 Strategic Growth Management Initiative *“to achieve and sustain essential improvements in the quality of life and economic well-being of all families and individuals in all parts of our community and to develop a growth management strategy to control and promote smart community growth”*
- Enter into Vision 2033 agreement with:
 - Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA)
 - Chatham County
- Create the formation of a tax-exempt, nonprofit foundation to coordinate the delivery of Vision 2033
- Agreement with NGO entity would come back for City Council approval