



Fiscal Year

2025

YEAR IN REVIEW

GOLDEN ISLES

DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

2024
2025

Board of Governors

Christy Jordan (Chair)

Chief Executive Officer
Southeast Georgia Health System

Bill Dawson (Vice Chair)

Retired, General Manager of Operations
Georgia Ports Authority

Daren Pietsch (Secretary Treasurer)

President/Director
Torras Companies

Greer Anderson

Regional Banking Manager
United Community Bank

Richard B. Nixon, Jr.

South Atlantic Gulf Coast District Representative
International Longshoremen

Staff

Ryan Moore

President & CEO
Golden Isles Development Authority

McKenzie Padgett

Director of Business Development
Golden Isles Development Authority

Sherri Pruitt

Director of Business Retention and Expansion
Golden Isles Development Authority

Joan Hearn

Financial Administrator
Golden Isles Development Authority

A Year in Review...

As the sun sets on another fiscal year in the Golden Isles, I look back with pride and towards the new year with great anticipation. The work that we do never ends, but rather, is a process of continual new beginnings. This year the Golden Isles Development Authority (GIDA) has closed the books on industrial parks, sold properties, invested to become self-sustaining, and embarked on new journeys – it's a great day to be in the Golden Isles!

Culminating work that started decades ago, the McBride Industrial Park is now fully occupied. With recent investments from Jered-Par Marine and flexible warehouse development, the park is generating jobs and taxes. Likewise, the Gateway Tract on I-95 now has 560,000 feet of industrial buildings in construction, soon to be occupied by our talented workforce. The East Gate Industrial Park was also sold, is privately owned and on the Glynn County tax rolls.

Through these sales, and the sale of a dorm facility to the federal government, this year marks a milestone in the GIDA's evolution as we are now self-sustaining. Investing in real estate and risk averse securities, we can now concentrate on maximizing our return to the community.

While we've made great progress this year, there's still work to do. To stay competitive, we must keep investing in property development—because in today's market, even days can determine whether a company chooses us or goes elsewhere

Our marketing efforts continue to bear fruit as more people are engaging with our brand than ever before, but we will continue to refine our message and target the correct audiences. Entrepreneurs are thriving in the Golden Isles, creating brands and businesses – especially in downtown Brunswick. But we will not be complacent, we will continue to connect and empower our small businesses.

And perhaps most important, we will continue to grow and equip our workforce with the skills of today for the jobs of tomorrow. With low unemployment and much opportunity for growth, area businesses need qualified people. We will engage and grow young people with the Keep Glynn Running message as they are trained by our educational partners, and we will continue to find novel ways to attract new residents and employees.

None of this is possible without the wonderful Board Members that the GIDA has had over the years. Our leadership is second to none and I owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude. Thank you all for giving back to the place that we've chosen to call home.

Ryan Moore
President & CEO
GIDA



ABOUT US



Mission

Promote economic prosperity for Brunswick and Glynn County by assisting retention and expansion of existing industries, securing new diversified industry locations, and creating job opportunities and investments.

Shared Vision

Working together to make Brunswick and the Golden Isles an exceptional place in Georgia to live, work, and visit by strengthening our communities and enhancing the quality of life.

Organizations across Brunswick have come together to form a Shared Vision for the community.



Core Values



We are **dynamic**, adaptable generalists. We value and respect each other's time in and out of the office. We are **impactful**, **collaborate** where possible, but **lead** when necessary.



We hold ourselves **accountable** – good or bad. We do not pass the buck.



We are **bold**. We act **decisively** and embrace change. We are willing to fail fast and move on. We believe none of us is as smart as all of us.



We **listen**. We seek opportunities and provide solutions by treating our partners like the individuals they are. **We innovate** and encourage all members of our community to contribute. We foster open-mindedness, compassion, and **inclusion** among the various groups we support.



Shaping Success

Accountability for actions and results is one of GIDA's core values. To uphold this standard, GIDA utilizes the Objective and Key Results (OKR) system for goal setting, supported by structured processes and tools to monitor progress and ensure alignment.

Here are this year's results:

42 New Projects

The potential value for these projects is over \$22B of new, direct capital investment and over 13,000 potential jobs.

45 Attraction-Focused Activities

Events hosted or attended, including direct outreach to support the attraction of new industry.

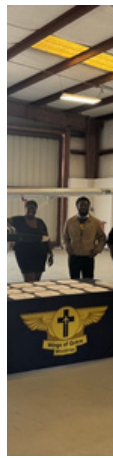
51 Industrial Business Visits

Current and new business visits to industrial businesses located in Glynn County show an increase of 5% over the prior year.

Over 100% of Growth Across Social Platforms

GIDA increased engagement rates on LinkedIn (115% growth), Facebook (110% growth), and Instagram (105% growth).





Nurturing Growth



GIDA drives long-term, sustainable growth by investing in the attraction of new industries, strategic real estate development, and the expansion of entrepreneurship throughout the Golden Isles.

Since 2020, GIDA has participated in seven major project announcements totaling \$178 million in direct capital investment. These announcements include Hillpointe, Jered, Buc-ee's, Live Oak Fiber, Symrise, Second Harvest, and Weyerhaeuser Company—each contributing to the economic vitality of Glynn County.

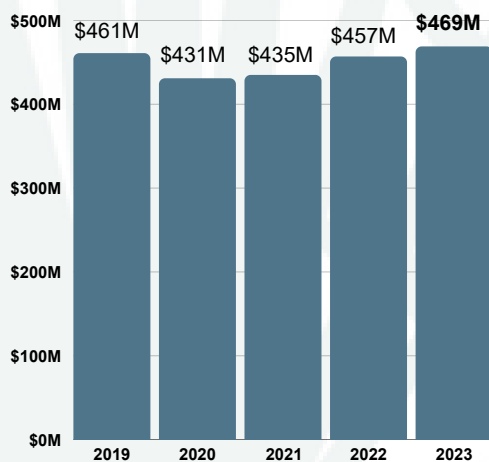
In that same period, GIDA has awarded \$420,000 through its Share the Future grant program to Glynn County-based companies to support local business expansions.

Additionally, GIDA serves as an advisor to the Glynn County Board of Commissioners on the Revolving Loan Fund program. Over the past five years, the Authority has recommended \$350,000 in loans to support small business growth and job creation in the community.



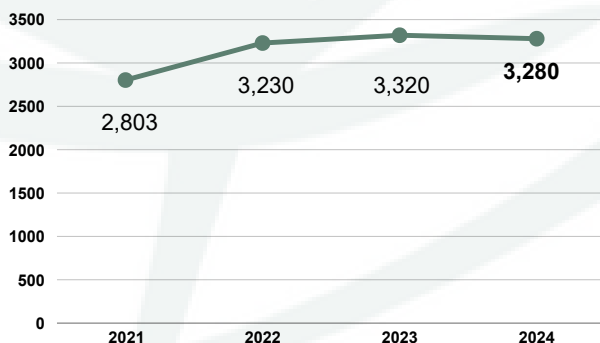
Total Wages & Household Income

The attraction and expansion of businesses have a ripple effect on the overall economic well-being of a community. GIDA pays close attention to how Glynn County is trending in wages, employment, Gross Domestic Product, number of private establishments (establishments that produce a good or service), and our industrial sector's overall value. The charts below illustrate the growth for the most current years available.



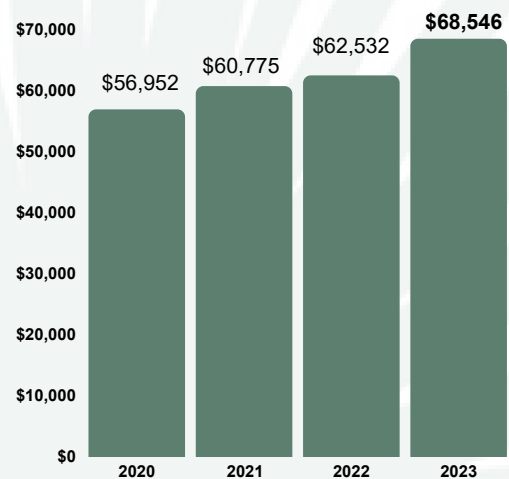
Total Wages

Average annual wages per worker increased 2.7% in the region over the preceding four quarters.



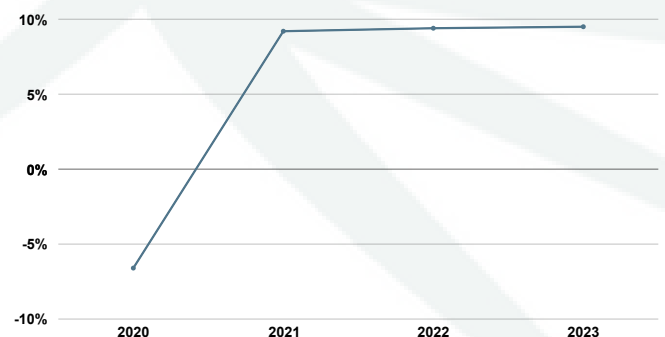
Private Establishments for All Industries

Glynn County's private business base has grown steadily over the past few years, increasing from 2,803 establishments in 2021 to 3,280 in 2024—a net gain of 477 businesses. While this year saw a slight dip from 3,320 to 3,280, the overall upward trend reflects a resilient and expanding local economy.



Median Household Income

The wage increase has had a positive impact on the median household income, which has increased by 20% between 2020 and 2023.



Gross Domestic Product Growth

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the total value of goods and services produced by a region. In 2023, nominal GDP in Glynn County, Georgia, expanded by 9.5%. As of 2023, the total GDP in Glynn County, Georgia, was \$5.78 billion.



PLACEMAKING

The Brick Martial Arts Academy

The Brick Martial Arts Academy relocated from St. Simons Island to Downtown Brunswick, bringing a dynamic mix of martial arts, gymnastics, and fitness programs to the community. Today, it serves as a local hub for youth and adult training, hosting classes, camps, and community events that promote discipline, confidence, and connection.

Problem: While the interior flourished, the exterior required improvements to better reflect the company's brand and the coastal character of the community. The business needed enhanced signage, lighting, and a vibrant mural to increase visibility, safety, and appeal. Local artist Megan Torello, who previously painted a mural in the area, was selected to design a new piece celebrating community connection.

Solution: GIDA supported enhancements that transformed the building's exterior, improving visibility, curb appeal, and the overall perception of the business. These upgrades made the facility more attractive, welcoming, and competitive in the market.

Results: The revitalized exterior boosted The Brick's presence in the community, reinforcing its identity while contributing to the vibrancy of Downtown Brunswick. The project also highlighted the power of local partnerships in supporting small business success and creative placemaking.





“Thanks to the Golden Isles Development Authority’s investment in our community, we were able to breathe new life into the exterior of our academy by updating our coastal mural and adding branded signage to our fencing. Their support has helped us create a vibrant and welcoming space that reflects who we are and what we stand for—community, growth, and empowerment.”

Joey Harrison
Owner



We Make, We Thrive

The industrial sector is a vital component of the local economy and the focus of the GIDA's attraction and expansion efforts. Some of the greatest ad valorem tax-paying entities in Glynn County are industrial facilities.

Furthermore, because manufacturing is a capital-intensive activity, industrial property typically contributes more significantly to the tax digest than other land uses. In Glynn County, industrial acreage made up just 1.3% of total land area in 2024, yet it accounted for 8.9% of the county's total tax digest value. Over the past five years, the industrial digest value has grown by 30%—from \$629 million in 2020 to \$820 million in 2024—underscoring the economic importance and tax revenue potential of industrial development.

As of the first quarter of 2024, there were 1,969 people employed in manufacturing in Glynn County, and manufacturing paid an average annual wage of \$74,483, a wage that is 45.37% higher than the average of all industries in Glynn County (\$51,239).

TOP 10 TOTAL REAL & PERSONAL TAX 2024

BRUNSWICK CELLULOSE INC	\$4,204,385
GEORGIA POWER COMPANY	\$2,609,969
SEA ISLAND COMPANY, INC	\$1,157,064
SYMRISE, INC	\$436,204
SEA ISLAND ACQUISITION	\$423,973
KING & PRINCE SEAFOOD CORP	\$349,763
RICH PRODUCTS	\$345,134
FOX RUN, GA, LLC	\$324,705
NHI-REIT OF SEASIDE, LLC	\$322,591
BRUNSWICK CELLULOSE, LLC	\$311,947





SUCCESS STORY

LOCAL IMPACT

Wallenius Wilhelmsen

Wallenius Wilhelmsen, a global leader in vehicle logistics, opened its new hub at the Port of Brunswick in early 2025. The 300-acre facility supports vehicle and equipment processing, allowing faster delivery and expanded operations across the U.S. Southeast.

Problem:

Wallenius Wilhelmsen needed support hiring for its new state-of-the-art facility at the Colonel's Island Terminal in Brunswick. The company also expressed interest in building stronger connections within the local community.

Solution:

GIDA worked closely with Wallenius Wilhelmsen to promote local hiring efforts and facilitate introductions to community leaders and partners, ensuring the company felt welcomed and connected from the start.

Results:

Wallenius Wilhelmsen successfully staffed its new Brunswick operation and has established strong, ongoing relationships with the community, helping solidify its presence in the Golden Isles.



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“The Golden Isles Development Authority assisted Wallenius Wilhelmsen make connections with schools, partners, and organizations within the Golden Isles community. These connections are instrumental for workforce development at WW and in the Brunswick community.”

Matt Henderson
General Manager

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EMBRACING ACCOUNTABILITY

Funding Sources

Contract with Glynn County	21%
Interest Collected	31%
FTZ Revenue	1.5%
Lease Payments	2.5%
Sale of Assets	44%

Funding Uses

Operational Costs	56%
Capital Improvements	22%
Marketing	22%

Keeping it Local

The GIDA proudly champions our local and small business community, recognizing that when entrepreneurs and Main Street businesses succeed, the entire region benefits. Nationally, for every dollar spent at a small business, approximately 67 cents stays within the local community—fueling jobs, reinvestment, and long-term economic growth. That’s why GIDA is committed to shopping local and prioritizing local vendors whenever possible. It’s a meaningful way to help build a stronger, more resilient Golden Isles.

GIDA invested \$120,000 directly into the local economy through its Share the Future Initiative. In total, at least 68% of GIDA’s controllable spending was directed to local businesses—including engineering services for clients, print materials, and everyday office supplies. GIDA doesn’t just support local—it spends local.





YOUR PROGRESS, OUR PURPOSE

GIDA works for the community. Here are a few initiatives and highlights from the past year:

- Hillpointe Groundbreaking
- JB2 Groundbreaking
- Buc-ee's Ribbon Cutting
- Georgia Breakbulk GRAD Certification
- OneGeorgia Grant
- Share the Future Aerospace Addition
- GIDA /Wings of Grace Partnership
- GIDA Commercial Investment Support
- Talent Discovery Showcase
- 3rd Annual Manufacturing Dinner
- Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Growth



Your Progress explained...

Hillpointe Groundbreaking: Hillpointe, LLC broke ground this year on a major distribution project at Exit 42 on Interstate 95, bringing a \$40 million investment and 500,000 square feet of new industrial space to Glynn County. Located in Tradewinds Technology Park, the development marks the first vertical construction at the site. Half of the facility will be occupied by Hillpointe Developers to warehouse and distribute construction materials, while the remaining space is already leased to other tenants. With demand continuing to rise, Hillpointe is already planning to further expand in the area.

JB2 Groundbreaking: A 60,000-square-foot manufacturing facility is currently under development at Exit 42 off Interstate 95. The project, built for a major online retailer, is expected to be officially announced by Q4 of 2025. This facility further establishes Exit 42 as a hub for advanced manufacturing and logistics in Glynn County. With this addition, the GIDA has now successfully sold all of its property at Exit 42 to Hillpointe and JB2 Partners, two key players fueling growth at Tradewinds Technology Park.

Buc-ee's Ribbon Cutting: In Q2 of 2025, Glynn County celebrated the grand opening of Buc-ee's at Exit 42 with hundreds of local residents and travelers in attendance. The 74,000-square-foot travel center brings approximately 200 jobs to the area. The celebration highlighted the success of recent interchange improvements, which handled the heavy traffic seamlessly on opening day. Buc-ee's marks a major milestone in the continued growth and momentum at Exit 42.

Georgia Breakbulk GRAD Certification: This year, GIDA secured GRAD certification for the Georgia Breakbulk Logistics Park—a 1,500-acre, rail-served industrial site strategically located off Exit 29. This designation—Georgia Ready for Accelerated Development—significantly enhances the site's marketability by confirming its readiness for industrial investment. It's a major win for GIDA and the Golden Isles, ensuring GIDA remains competitive in today's fast-paced project environment and well-positioned to attract large-scale logistics and manufacturing opportunities.

OneGeorgia Grant: GIDA was awarded a \$2 million OneGeorgia grant through the Rural Site Development Initiative to enhance infrastructure at the Georgia Breakbulk Logistics Park, a 1,500-acre, GRAD-certified, rail-served site at Exit 29. The funding will support critical improvements including road access, water and sewer extensions, and site preparation—further boosting the park's readiness and appeal to industrial users. This investment strengthens Glynn County's ability to compete for large-scale economic development opportunities.

Share the Future Aerospace Addition: Recognizing the Golden Isles' strong aviation heritage, GIDA launched a new matching grant program to support growth in the aerospace sector. The initiative helps businesses train and hire workers in aviation mechanics and avionics, while also supporting facility upgrades and workforce-related equipment needs. Companies are eligible for up to \$15,000 in matching funds, reimbursed upon project completion—strengthening our local talent pipeline and positioning the region for continued aerospace success.

Your Progress explained...

GIDA/Wings of Grace Partnership: In Q2 of 2025, GIDA was awarded a \$40,000 grant to Christ Flight Ministries to expand access to aviation maintenance training in Glynn County. This investment—funded through a Georgia Power Company workforce grant—supports hands-on instruction for students pursuing FAA certification, helping to strengthen the region’s aviation workforce. The program removes financial barriers, saving students an average of \$12,000, and aligns with GIDA’s mission to build a local talent pipeline for the growing aerospace sector.

GIDA Commercial Investment Support: This year, GIDA adopted a new commercial investment policy to attract high-impact businesses that enhance our economy and community. The policy supports projects that bring at least \$50 million in new capital investment, generate the majority of their revenue from outside Glynn County, create a minimum of 25 quality jobs, and introduce unique offerings to the local market. Through this initiative, the Authority is prepared to offer tailored incentives—subject to Board approval—to projects that align with GIDA’s long-term vision for economic growth and prosperity.

Talent Discovery Showcase: In Q3 of 2024, GIDA hosted the first-ever Talent Discovery Showcase during Downtown Brunswick’s First Friday, drawing students, families, and professionals to explore local careers in the skilled trades. Held at GIDA’s downtown office, the event featured interactive exhibits from key workforce partners, including Coastal Pines Technical College’s Mobile Welding Lab, Golden Isles College and Career Academy’s heavy machinery simulators and Wings of Grace’s aeronautical flight simulator. The event also spotlighted the Keep Glynn Running campaign, connecting residents to career pathways and training resources. As part of the broader Golden Isles Talent Development Strategy, the Showcase energized the community around the opportunities available to grow Glynn’s workforce.

3rd Annual Manufacturing Appreciation Dinner: In Q3 of 2024, GIDA hosted its Annual Industry Appreciation Dinner at Silver Bluff Brewing to celebrate the businesses powering Glynn County’s economy. The event recognized standout achievements with awards presented to: King and Prince Seafood (Manufacturer of the Year), Wallenius Wilhelmsen (Innovation Excellence Award), One Love Organics (Locally Grown Manufacturer of the Year), and Julie Martin (Dave Smith Award). With support from generous sponsors, the evening honored the vital role of local industry and reaffirmed GIDA’s commitment to supporting sustainable growth and job creation across the region.

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem Growth: GIDA continues to strengthen its partnership with the Lucas Center for Entrepreneurship and the College of Coastal Georgia, sharing a collaborative space in Downtown Brunswick that serves as a hub for small business innovation. Over the past three years, the Lucas Center has supported more than 700 entrepreneurs. Coupled with GIDA’s Share the Future grant—awarding over \$120,000 to help local small businesses grow—this partnership is fueling a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem across the region.

Looking Ahead

Strategic Vision 2026-2028

In July 2025, the GIDA Board of Governors and staff reaffirmed the organization's strategic vision and established key priorities to guide its efforts through fiscal years 2026 and 2027. Through thoughtful planning and collaboration, they outlined a bold roadmap focused on advancing innovation, infrastructure, business attraction, and workforce development. These strategic pillars will drive sustainable growth and long-term prosperity for the Golden Isles.

Target Industry Strategy

As part of its annual Objective and Key Results (OKR) process, GIDA identified a focused industry strategy as a key priority for fiscal year 2026—beginning with aerospace. Guided by input from the Board of Governors, GIDA is actively researching how peer markets support aerospace growth and exploring opportunities to enhance regional competitiveness. With the Brunswick Golden Isles Airport and the GRAD Certified Innovation Isles Aerospace Park, the region is uniquely positioned to attract aviation-related investment and foster strategic collaboration.

Site Acquisition

Site development remains a top priority for GIDA in fiscal year 2026 to support continued growth and meet the evolving needs of prospective industries. GIDA is actively working to expand its industrial footprint by securing properties that accommodate a diverse range of project types, including those requiring rail access and those that do not. This strategic approach ensures the region remains both competitive and responsive in today's dynamic market.

Industry and Leadership Roundtables

Industry roundtables are important for fostering collaboration, problem-solving, and growth within a specific industry. GIDA will hold industry roundtables for existing industries in the Golden Isles to bring together key stakeholders to help create an environment conducive to innovation, economic development, and long-term prosperity.



WE INVEST in our community

It has been an incredible honor to serve as Chair of the Board of Governors for the Golden Isles Development Authority. As this marks my final year on the Board, I want to express my sincere appreciation to my fellow board members and the GIDA staff for their dedication, forward thinking, and commitment to advancing economic opportunity in Glynn County.

This year brought exciting milestones that reflect the strength of our partnerships and the growing momentum of our region. We celebrated groundbreakings with Hillpointe Development and JB2, whose combined projects will deliver more than 560,000 square feet of warehouse and distribution space and represent over \$70 million in capital investment. In addition, the much-anticipated Buc-ee's Travel Center opened amidst great fanfare. Together, these projects account for over \$100 million in capital investment and more than 300 new jobs for the Golden Isles.

We also made significant strides in preparing for future growth.

With an additional 1,500 acres at the Georgia Breakbulk Logistics Park now GRAD certified, Glynn County now offers over 2,500 acres of project-ready industrial property. A \$2 million grant from the OneGeorgia Authority will further enhance infrastructure at the Breakbulk site, supporting long-term economic expansion.

None of this would be possible without the power of partnerships. Our success is the result of unwavering support from the community, our County Commission, local and state leaders, and the dedicated efforts of the GIDA Board and staff. I am proud of what we've accomplished together and look forward to watching the continued success of this team and the bright future ahead for the Golden Isles.

Respectfully,

Christy Jordan
2023-2025 Chairperson
GIDA Board of Governors



Thank you.

We invite you to stay connected.



[/GoldenIslesDev](#)



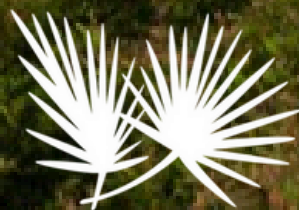
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