

# A YEAR IN REVIEW



*Promoting Economic Prosperity FY 2020-21*

The Golden Isles Development Authority

2020  
2021

# Staff

**Ryan Moore**

*President & CEO*

*Golden Isles Development Authority*

**Vanessa Wagner**

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**Sherri Pruitt**

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*Golden Isles Development Authority*

**Joan Hearn**

*Financial Administrator*

*Golden Isles Development Authority*

# Board of Governors

**Wayne Johnson (Chairman)**

*Market President, Synovus Bank*

**Jack Kilgore (Vice-Chairman)**

*Retired, President of Rich's Products Consumer Brands  
Division*

**Bill Austin (Secretary Treasurer)**

*Retired, Human Resources Professional*

**Jones Hooks**

*Executive Director, Jekyll Island Authority*

**Christy Jordan**

*Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel  
Southeast Georgia Health System*



# A YEAR IN REVIEW

It does not take long for someone living on the coast to become familiar with the rhythm of the tides. In and out, constantly changing, but perfectly predictable. I am not sure that anyone predicted how quickly the economic tide would swing as our community experienced the uncertainty and economic collapse of the pandemic, nor the pace at which the economy has come back to full tilt – "help wanted" signs in every window. These are interesting times to be sure, but despite the changing economic landscape, the Golden Isles Development Authority (GIDA) has maintained its singular vision for an exceptional Golden Isles. Our board has been a wealth of wisdom and leadership throughout this year with Chairman Wayne Johnson's calm and steady hand at the helm. I am proud to work for this Board and this community, alongside a staff at GIDA that is the best in the business.

GIDA continued to position the Golden Isles as the best destination for business in the south. We enhanced our marketing, revamped our website, doubled our social media traffic, and continually refine our message. In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and workforce development partners, we completed a workforce development strategy. We are executing on the strategy to attract and grow a trained, qualified, and available workforce.

We have invested in our landholdings to create more competitive sites. Amazingly, we have filled our pipeline with potential projects. The size and scope of these projects are unparalleled, and there is no greater priority than showing the owners of these projects that the Golden Isles is the destination for new business.

As we ebb into the new fiscal year, we are working hard to capitalize on this swell of new projects. We have plans to invest in new buildings, to coordinate with existing industry to expand, and will continue to market this wonderful place we call home.

To all of the new residents that found their way to our community this year, we welcome you to the Golden Isles; we encourage you to get involved in your new community, invite you to strengthen and grow our leadership, and we share with you the serenity of the tides.

Sincerely,

**Ryan Moore**  
*President & CEO*



# 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 and the Golden Isles have come together to form a Shared Vision for the community.*





# ORGANIZATIONAL CORE VALUES

- We are dynamic, adaptable generalists. We value and respect each other's time in and out of the office. We 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 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 customers like the individuals they are. We are stronger when we actively encourage all members of our community to contribute. We foster open-mindedness, compassion, and inclusion among the various groups we support.



# PASSION

## what drives us

Accountability for our actions and results is one of our core values. Since 2019, GIDA has used the Objective and Key Results (OKR) system for goal setting and has processes and tools to track the team's actions towards reaching those goals.

### 15 New Projects

The potential value for these projects is \$4B of new direct, capital investment and over 5,000 new jobs. This brings the total active projects to 19 that GIDA is competing for on behalf of Glynn County.

### 44 Attraction-Focused Activities

Events hosted, or attended, including direct outreach to support the attraction of new industry. An increase of 18% over prior year.

### 46 Industrial Business Visits

Visits to industrial businesses located in Glynn County. An increase of 27% over prior year.

### 126% Growth Across Social Platforms

GIDA increased engagement rates on LinkedIn (100% growth) Facebook (143% growth) and Instagram (125% growth).





# GROWING THE GOLDEN ISLES

## Our mission is economic prosperity.

Our organization strives for long-term and sustainable growth by investing in the attraction of new industries, industrial parks, and the expansion of entrepreneurship in the Golden Isles.

Since 2016 GIDA participated in four announcements for \$422 M in direct capital investment and 1,011 new jobs. The announcements include Peach Blossom Energy, Weyerhaeuser Company, Beachview Rental and Design, Stambuagh Aviation, Precision Metals Inc., and Radial Contact Center.

\$235,000 in Share the Future Funds have been awarded in that time to Glynn County based companies. These funds were in support of local expansions in the community.

GIDA also reviews and provides recommendations on Glynn County's Revolving Loan Fund. In the past five years GIDA has recommended \$227,050 in loans to the Board of Commissioners.

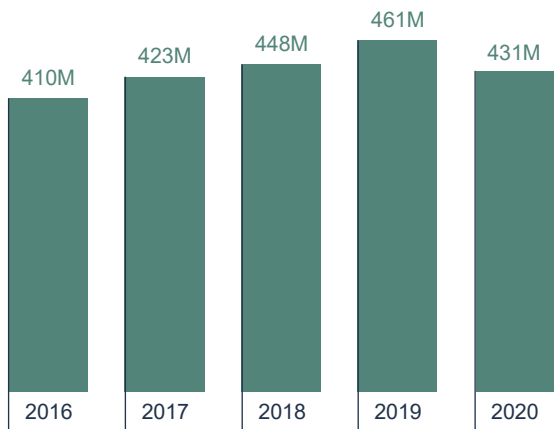




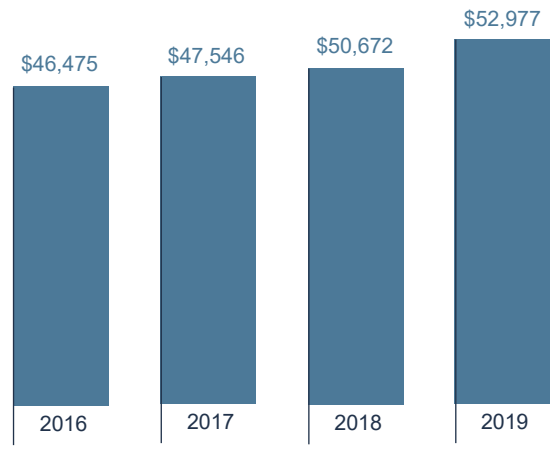
The attraction and expansion of businesses have a ripple effect on the overall economic well-being of a community. GIDA pays close attention to how Glynn County is trending in Wages, Employment, Gross Domestic Product, Occupation Permits (new business starts), and our industrial sector's overall value. The charts below illustrate the growth for the most current years available.

## Total Wages & Household Income

During the pandemic the annual wages, per worker, decreased significantly; however, began to rise again at the end of the year. Despite the wage increases being below prior year, Glynn still saw an increase in the median household income which has increased by 15% between 2015-2019.



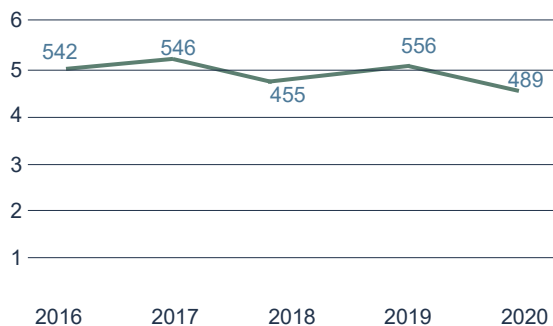
Total Wages



Median Household Income

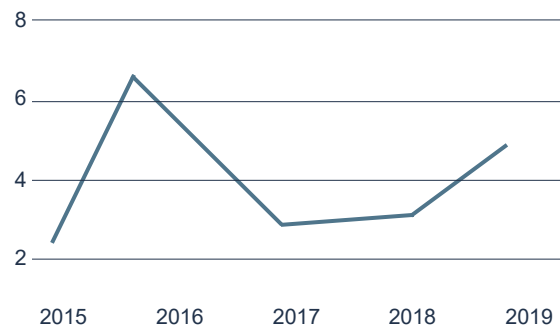
After a significant drop in 2020Q1, the average annual wages per worker began to recover and increased .8%. The national average for the same time was 5.3%.

The wage increase has had a positive impact on the median household income which has increased by 15% between 2015-2019.



### Occupation Permits / Business License

In the past five years 2,588 new occupation tax permits have been issued for businesses operating in the unincorporated areas of Glynn County. This is an indicator of new businesses, or companies operating, within the County.



### Gross Domestic Product Growth

In 2019, nominal GDP in Glynn County expanded 4.9%. This follows growth of 7.2% in 2018. As of 2019, total GDP in Glynn County was \$4,171,107,000.

# PROVIDING SOLUTIONS

## sml surf co.

**Problem:** The owner of sml surf co., Geoffrey Gable, is a local board shaper and manufacturer located in Brunswick, GA. Five years ago, Geoffrey caught the surf bug and began shaping and repairing boards in his free time. The surf community discovered his talent for the craft, and his hobby soon became a full-time business. After nearly two years in a studio in Historic Brunswick, the demand for his products and services grew exponentially. As a startup, he faced the challenges of accessing the capital needed to purchase both the equipment and larger space necessary to grow his business.

**Solutions:** The Golden Isles Development Authority (GIDA) worked with the Downtown Development Authority to help Geoffrey navigate the local real estate market. They identified a location that was larger, and with a startup-friendly cost. After Geoffrey secured a larger shop that would also increase his visibility, he was able to apply for funds through GIDA's Share the Future-Innovating program.

**Results:** Geoffrey moved into a new location in September of 2020. The new space allows him to produce more boards and even add new services and products. Additionally, the GIDA Board of Governors approved \$6,233.94 in November to help him purchase the equipment needed to produce more, faster.





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“The equipment I was able to get is helping grow my business in creating new products. I’ve been able to cut my production times down.

This has really been a help in growing my small business. I’m going to hire my first employee which is amazing. Thank you to everyone that has helped.”

Geoffrey Gable

sml surf co.



# MANUFACTURING WORKS FOR GLYNN

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

Furthermore, because manufacturing is a capital-intensive activity, industrial property generally represents more value to the tax digest than other uses. Industrial acreage accounted for only 2.4% of the total acreage in Glynn County, but accounted for 11.7% of the total digest value (2019).

As of the first quarter of 2021, there were 1,796 people employed in manufacturing in Glynn county and manufacturing paid an average annual wage of \$67, 213 a wage that is 31% higher than the average of all industries in Glynn County (\$46,228).

## TOP 10 TOTAL REAL & PERSONAL TAX 2020

BRUNSWICK CELLULOSE INC .....	3,555,827
GEORGIA POWER COMPANY .....	2,323,893
SEA ISLAND ACQUISITION LLC .....	1,694,644
PINOVA INC .....	495,416
MERCEDES-BENZ USA LLC.....	371,458
EXCLUSIVE RESORTS SI1 LLC .....	366,589
BRUNSWICK CELLULOSE LLC.....	338,456
KING & PRINCE SEAFOOD CORP .....	303,251
GULFSTREAM AEROSPACE CORP .....	224,169
STRATA GRANDELKAE LLC .....	198,441





THIS  
GIRL  
TAKES

5" JAW WIDTH

# INNOVATION

## Southern Ballistic Research, LLC

**Problem:** Located in the Brunswick-McBride Industrial Park, Southern Ballistics Research, LLC (SBR) is a manufacturer of precision small ammunition and weapons. SBR is a veteran owned and operated small business whose primary customers are local, state, and federal governmental agencies. The ammunition provided to these agencies are of law enforcement grade and require waterproofing and a protective sealant. One of their key accounts could increase their purchasing with SBR on this type of product; however, SBR did not have the equipment that would meet the increased demand.

**Solutions:** After the owner, Buddy Singleton met with the Golden Isles Development Authority (GIDA) during an outreach effort from Sherri Pruitt, Business Retention and Expansion Coordinator, they became aware of the Share the Future Program helping small manufacturers purchase new equipment. In December of 2020, Mr. Singleton applied for the program. GIDA's Board of Governors approved the application on January 5, 2021.

**Results:** SBR was awarded \$10,000 to help them with the purchase of an ammunition cartridge waterproofing machine that will increase and streamline productions. The equipment allowed them to offer a broader range of products to their law enforcement customers. Additionally, to support the increased production, SBR felt confident to move forward with the adding two new employees at its Brunswick facility.



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“The Share the Future award from Golden Isles Development Authority allowed my business to expand my ammunitions waterproofing capability. Waterproofing of ammunition is a growing requirement for government and law enforcement agencies use in duty and training ammunition.

As a result, SBR has been able to bid and apply for various federal and law enforcement contracts. The increased capacities have developed two additional staff positions.”

Buddy Singleton

SBR, INC



# ACCOUNTABLE

## Funding sources

Contract with Glynn County	65%
Interest Collected	10%
Foreign Trade Zone Fees	4%
Bond Fees	6%
Lease Payments	15%

## Funding uses

Operational Costs	74%
Capital Improvements	12%
Marketing	14%

## Keeping it local

The team at GIDA are champions of the local, and small business community. Not only do we want our entrepreneurs and main street businesses to succeed, but we recognize the benefits shopping local has for our community. \*For every dollar spent a small business in the U.S., approximately 67 cents stay in the local community. We strive to purchase local as much as possible to support our business community.

**\$40,600** of our budget expenditures went to local business through our Share the Future Initiative.

**60%** of our controllable spending was with local businesses. Everything from engineering work for clients, print material, or office supplies- GIDA thinks, and spends, local first.

*\*amex.co/another-reason-shop-small*





# AT WORK FOR YOU

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

- **Glynn County supports Georgia's renewable energy goals**
- **Job Portal launched to connect local jobs with talent**
- **Speculative development underway at North Glynn**
- **B.Y.O.Job campaign turns visitors into residents**
- **This Girl Can introduces non-traditional careers**
- **GIDA's industrial parks and properties improved**
- **Share the Future helps entrepreneurs grow**
- **Talent Development Strategy published**
- **GIDA's website gets a new look**
- **Maker Meetup event launched**

**DEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY**

# At work for you explained

**Renewable Energy:** In April the GIDA Board approved a memorandum of understanding with Peach Blossom Energy to support a capital investment of least \$250 million in solar panels on a 5,248-acre site in western Glynn County. This has the potential to support the County with approximately \$17M in taxes over thirty-five years. The investment is contingent upon the organization securing the appropriate energy contracts.

**Job Portal:** The Keep Glynn Running Job Portal aggregates postings from jobs in Glynn County from over 30,000 job boards. The tool removes duplicate postings and presents the job promotions in a user-friendly format. The portal was launched to help reduce friction between connecting local employers with talent and is available to all residents and businesses at [keepglynnrunning.com](http://keepglynnrunning.com).

**SPEC Design:** GIDA kicked off the planning and engineering for a speculative development at North Glynn Commerce Park. The development is in response to the historically low inventory of flex/industrial property across the U.S. The addition of a new product like the building will support the community's industrial growth and help us remain competitive in the global site selection market.

**B.Y.O.Job:** This national campaign's goal focused on strengthening our talent pipeline by providing remote workers with information on living and working in the Golden Isles. The message included stories from professionals that migrated here, real estate resources, coffee with a local, and links to the job portal. The landing site is still in use at [workfromglynn.com](http://workfromglynn.com).

**This Girl Can:** The Golden Isles College and Career Academy (GICCA) worked with Coastal Pines Technical College and GIDA to launch This Girl Can- a workshop series introducing female students and their families to careers and educational programs where women are underrepresented. The hands-on workshops including welding, automotive, and engineering. The program is set to expand in 2021-22.

**Industrial Parks:** Over \$300,000 was invested into the industrial parks and properties owned or managed by GIDA. Investments included a wetlands delineation at Golden Isles-Brunswick Airport, engineering and design of the speculative development, and updates to the industrial park signs at Brunswick-McBride, East Gate, and North Glynn.



**Share the Future:** The Share the Future Initiative was developed to give local area businesses access to capital to grow and promote their businesses. This year GIDA approved \$40,600 in funding to six manufacturers and entrepreneurs in Glynn County. This year's projects helped fund equipment purchases and exterior facility improvements. GIDA promoted all funding recipients on the website and social media platforms @goldenislesdev. This year's recipients included: Kut-Kwick Corporation, East River Creek Art Gallery, Arlene's Alterations, Southern Ballistics Research LLC, sml surf co., and Odin Lumber.

**Talent Development:** In 2020 GIDA and the Brunswick-Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce (BGICoC) launched an effort to develop a community-wide talent development strategy for the Golden Isles. The project assesses the current workforce initiatives and programs, identified gaps, and presented a roadmap for advancing talent development from 2021-2025. In March of 2021, GIDA and BGICoC released the strategy, and the implementation began the following month. The community can access the strategy and learn more at [growglynnsworkforce.com](http://growglynnsworkforce.com).

**Website:** We are responsible for communicating the value of locating a business to the Golden Isles to companies and consultants across the Country and internationally. This year we redesigned our website so that companies and consultants can find the information they need to make an informed location decision. To support this, GIDA updated content for search engine optimization, enhanced our property-search features, and added the ability to translate the website from English to five other languages. Explore the new site at [goldenislesdev.com](http://goldenislesdev.com).

**Makers:** In the fall of 2020, we launched a new monthly networking event for the business community- Maker Meetups. These events provide a casual environment for professional, aspiring, and hobby makers to meet and share their business, startup resources, and industry best practices. When COVID-19 or other factors kept us from meeting in-person, we began Facebook Live tours of local entrepreneurs' facilities. The live tours allow other creative entrepreneurs to connect with, and learn from, successful business owners across the County.



# BE BOLD

## Weyerhaeuser Company

**Problem:** Weyerhaeuser Company's Brunswick-based office space lease will be expiring in the fall of 2021. The organization saw this as an opportunity to elevate their local presence with an office solution aligned with their corporate locations across the Country. The available properties marketed by the real estate community were not meeting the specific criteria that Weyerhaeuser sought for their new office.

**Solutions:** Weyerhaeuser's real estate team and commercial broker contacted GIDA to identify the ideal property in Glynn County. GIDA worked alongside the Department of Community Development to locate any unlisted properties that were for sale. From November-February, the property identified as the best option moved through purchasing, rezoning, and an engineered site plan. During this time, Weyerhaeuser and GIDA reviewed the project's impact to the community to identify any local incentives available to help retain the company, existing jobs, and potential new investment benefiting Glynn County.

**Results:** In April of 2021, GIDA's Board of Governors approved the property's final purchase and incentive package for Weyerhaeuser's office construction. Construction of the new facility will begin once the remaining site plan, environmental, and other permits are approved. This project retains approximately 20 jobs that pay nearly 50% above the median salary in Glynn County and provides a new capital investment of over \$1,000,000.



“Our department and team are solutions-oriented. We understand that the development process is different in every community, and it is our goal to help clients identify a path forward that meets their goals and supports sustainable growth for the County.”

Pamela Thompson, Director  
Glynn County Department of Community Development



# LOOKING AHEAD

## Strategic Vision 2021-2023



Taking the time to acknowledge achievements, review goals, and identify new opportunities is critical for any organization. In August of 2021 the GIDA Board of Governors and staff met to review the past two year's strategic vision and determine priorities for the upcoming years. Here are some highlights of what will be included in our **Strategic Vision** for fiscal years 2021-2023.

### Refine Logistics

The Port of Brunswick and Colonel's Island offer strategic advantages for organizations dependent on breakbulk or Roll-on/Roll-off trade. This may include business's reliant on specialty materials, automotive or large equipment. Refining our "Logistics" target industry will position the Golden Isles to focus on the attraction of these port-related businesses.

### Site Development

In Q2 of 2021, the national vacancy rate for manufacturing products was 3.1%, and preleasing of industrial and manufacturing at record highs of 61.3%\*. Speed to market remains a critical factor for location decisions, and Glynn County currently lacks in available products for industrial or manufacturing that today's growing firms demand. Prioritizing investment in shovel-ready sites and new industrial/manufacturing buildings is a critical focus for Glynn County to compete for attraction or local expansion projects

### Entrepreneurship Focused

Entrepreneurs and small business owners play an important role in the Glynn County economy. Fifty-four percent of workers in Glynn County work at firms that meet the Small Business Administration's definition of small businesses. The addition of Entrepreneurship as a focus area encourages GIDA staff to identify resources, programs, and opportunities to grow this segment of our economy while attracting and retaining the talent that thrive in these environments.

### Industry Roundtables

GIDA will resume industry roundtables for target clusters in the region. The purpose is to increase the ability to collaborate, share resources, and solve industry-specific challenges among our local employers.

\* <https://www.us.jll.com/q2-2021-industrial-outlook-jll.pdf>  
\*\* US Census Bureau, Statistics of US Businesses, 2016

# WE ARE ADAPTABLE

It has been my honor to serve the past two years as Chairman of the Board of Governors for The Golden Isles Development Authority (GIDA). The Board is appointed to provide insight, skills, and direction to the GIDA staff and support them in carrying out their mission of economic prosperity for the Golden Isles.

Over the past year, I have been inspired countless times by the resiliency of our community. Together, we weathered the pandemic and began the path to recover. During this time, GIDA staff and Board remained vigilant in ensuring that the Golden Isles business community has access to the knowledge and resources that could support their growth beyond the pandemic and into the future.

I am grateful to my fellow board members who bring their experience from a wide range of industries to support the resilience and growth of the community. They have been generous with their time and expertise to help guide the staff of GIDA. Their combined knowledge will prove invaluable as GIDA adopts a new strategic vision for the coming years.

During my time serving as the Chairman of the Board closes, I remain confident in the staff and my fellow board members to support additional investment to the Golden Isles. Over the past two years, GIDA has competed for, on behalf of Glynn County, an impressive amount of new attraction and local expansion projects. I see no reason that staff cannot carry this momentum into the coming years.

As we close the chapter on the fiscal year 2021-2022, we have a lot to be proud of. We are moving forward a strong community, and with partners with whom we share a vision to work together to make the Golden Isles of Georgia an exceptional place to live, work, and visit.

Sincerely,

**Wayne Johnson**

Chairman, Board of Governors  
*Golden Isles Development Authority*

Market President  
*Synovus Bank*





**GOLDEN ISLES**  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

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