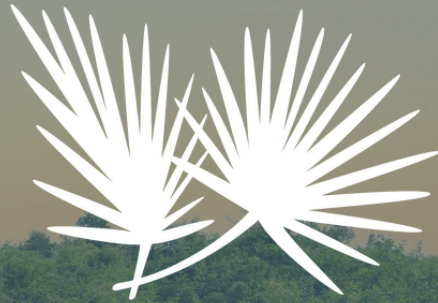




Fiscal Year

2026

YEAR IN REVIEW

GOLDEN ISLES

DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

2025
2026

Board of Governors

Bill Dawson (Chair)

Retired, General Manager of Operations
Georgia Ports Authority

Daren Pietsch (Vice Chair)

President
Torras Companies

Greer Anderson (Secretary Treasurer)

Regional Banking Manager
United Community Bank

Richard B. Nixon, Jr.

South Atlantic Gulf Coast District Representative
International Longshoremen

Walter Rafolski

Vice Chairman
Glynn County Commission

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

The Grass Stage

A letter from the President & CEO

There is a pine tree native to this coast that spends the first years of its life pretending to be a clump of grass.

The longleaf once covered ninety-two million acres from Virginia to Texas, and Glynn County sat in the middle of it. A longleaf seedling comes up, and then for about five years, it does nothing you can see. No trunk. No height. Just a tuft of needles at ground level while, underneath, it drives down a taproot and thickens its root collar. Foresters call it the grass stage. Walk past a longleaf seedling in April and you would swear the planting had failed.

Then the root collar reaches an inch across, and the tree leaves the ground behind at three feet a year. It bears its first cones around thirty years on. It lives two hundred and fifty.

I thought about that tree a good deal this year, because this was the year the ribbons got cut.

Buc-ee's. Amazon. Hillpointe. Jered. Four grand openings, roughly two hundred million dollars of investment and about four hundred fifty jobs. Announced in earlier years, this year finally open and hiring.

And I want to say plainly, that I did not plant any of it.

Every one of those projects was a prospect before it was a press release, and raw acreage before it was a prospect. Somebody sat in a room years ago and voted to buy land that nobody could yet see a use for. Somebody engineered the site. Somebody answered a site consultant's questions for eighteen months and never heard back. Some of those people sit on our Board today. Some had moved on before I ever got here. The harvest we celebrated this year was their planting, and the right thing to do in a year-end letter is to say so out loud.

Which makes the real question this: what did we put in the ground in FY2026?

In October we bought Mallard Industrial Park, approximately two hundred fifty acres off Highway 82 that grew timber for Weyerhaeuser and will now grow something else. If you drove out there this summer, you would have found a crew taking soil borings in a field.

That is the entire visible accomplishment. Underneath it: entrance road design, GDOT permitting, GRAD certification in process, and a state site development award that says Georgia thinks this ground is worth the trouble. Grass stage.

Georgia Breakbulk Logistics Park was named a CSX Select Site — fourteen hundred acres of former timberland that a railroad will now vouch for to the world. Grass stage.

We launched Elevate Glynn with the Lucas Center for Entrepreneurship: better than a million dollars of microloans, revolving loan capital, and matching grants aimed squarely at the ninety-five percent of businesses here that employ fewer than fifty people. We made thirty-six visits to industries already operating here, because the best economic development project is usually one that is already a part of our community. And we put students in front of employers at the Talent Discovery Showcase and on National Signing Day.

Not one of those things will cut a ribbon this year.

To our Board of Governors, who keep voting for things that will not pay off on their own watch — thank you. To Glynn County and the City of Brunswick, to the Chamber, to the Georgia Department of Economic Development, to Georgia Power and our utility partners, to Coastal Pines Technical College, the College of Coastal Georgia, and the Golden Isles College & Career Academy, and to every employer who let us in the door this year: thank you. And to a staff of three who carried a project pipeline of more than forty projects through all of it — I know what that cost, and so should everyone reading this.

The longleaf is the longest-lived pine in the South, and it earns that by refusing to hurry. We are planting for a Golden Isles that many of us will not be working in. That is what makes all of this worthwhile.

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:

\$40 Million in New Project Investment

New and expanding businesses committed \$40 million in capital investment, strengthening Glynn County's industrial base and supporting continued economic growth.

100 New Jobs Created

Business attraction and expansion projects generated 100 new jobs, creating additional career opportunities for residents across Glynn County.

38% of Projects Sourced Through Industry Partners

Relationships with site-selection consultants and commercial real estate professionals generated 38% of GIDA's project pipeline, exceeding the 25% goal.

5 Business Expansions Supported

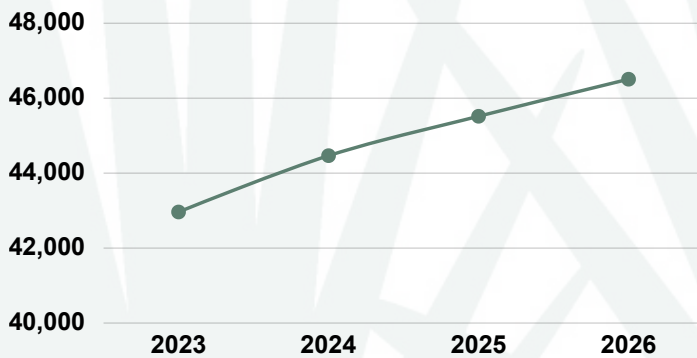
GIDA played an active role in expansions by Troy Acoustics, Jered, Quaker City Plating, Brewer Technologies, and RSW





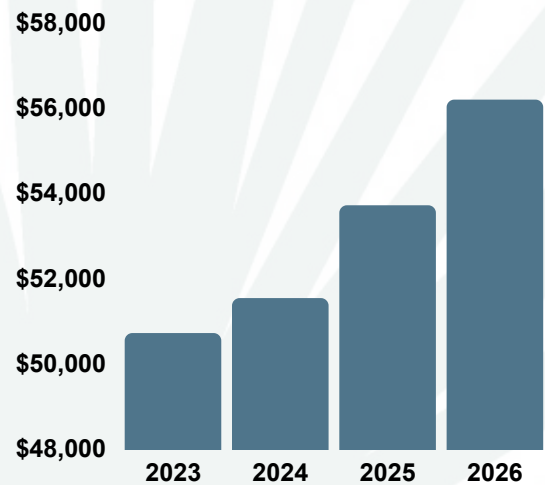
Economic Momentum

Business attraction, expansion and investment contribute to the overall strength and vitality of Glynn County's economy. GIDA monitors key economic indicators to better understand the community's growth and competitiveness, including employment, wages, cost of living and Gross Domestic Product. The latest data reflect continued economic momentum, with growing employment, rising wages and strong economic output across Glynn County.



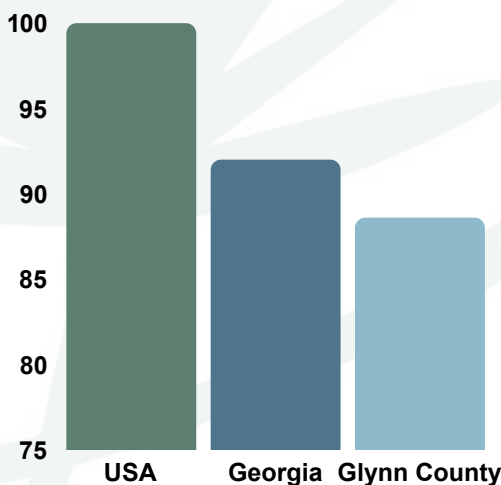
Employment Growth

As of Q1 2026, Glynn County supported 46,506 jobs, with total employment increasing 2.1% over the previous year.



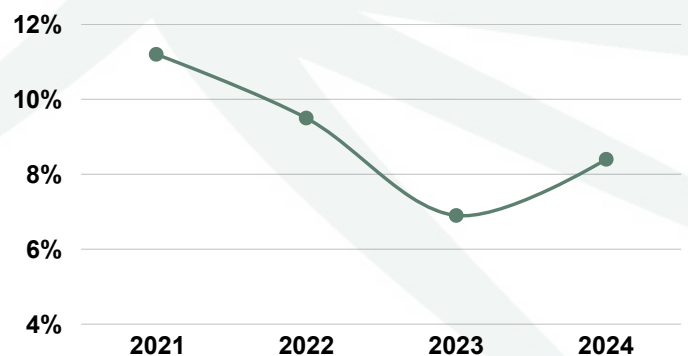
Wage Growth

Average annual wages in Glynn County reached \$56,207 in Q1 2026, increasing 4.6% over the preceding four quarters.



Cost of Living Index

Glynn County's cost of living is 11.4% lower than the national average, giving the county's \$56,207 average annual wage purchasing power equivalent to approximately \$63,408 nationally.



Gross Domestic Product Growth

Glynn County's economy produced approximately \$5.81 billion in GDP in 2024, growing 8.4% in one year, following 6.9% growth in 2023.



INNOVATION

Sea Island Forge

Sea Island Forge began with Steve and Sandy Schoettle's vision of combining their backgrounds in construction, custom furniture, product design, photography, and art with a shared passion for bringing people together. Since introducing its signature Fire Kettle at the Sea Island Farmers Market in 2014, the family-owned company has continued to grow its team of metalsmiths and expand its collection of heirloom-quality outdoor products.

Problem: As demand increased, Sea Island Forge needed additional production equipment to improve capacity, keep pace with customer orders, and pursue new opportunities for business growth.

Solution: GIDA awarded Sea Island Forge a \$10,000 Share the Future Fund Grant to reimburse qualifying equipment expenses at its Brunswick facility. The grant supported a larger equipment investment exceeding \$20,000 and was designed to help the company increase production and supply

Results: The new equipment will help Sea Island Forge expand its production capabilities and position the company to grow into additional markets and product opportunities. The investment supports the continued development of a local manufacturer committed to craftsmanship, family, community, and meaningful human connection.





We Make, We Thrive

The industrial sector is a vital component of the local economy and the focus of GIDA's business attraction and expansion efforts. Some of Glynn County's largest ad valorem taxpayers are industrial facilities. Because manufacturing is capital-intensive, industrial property typically contributes significantly more to the tax digest than other land uses.

In Glynn County, industrial acreage represents just 1.3% of the county's total land area, yet industrial property accounts for 9.1% of the total tax digest value. Over the past five years, the industrial digest grew by nearly 47%, increasing from \$1.572 billion in 2020 to \$2.304 billion in 2025. This growth underscores the substantial economic impact and tax revenue generated by industrial development.

As of the first quarter of 2026, there were 2,201 people employed in manufacturing in Glynn County, and manufacturing paid an average annual wage of \$81,126, a wage that is 44% higher than the average of all industries in Glynn County (\$56,207).

TOP 10 TOTAL REAL & PERSONAL TAX 2025

BRUNSWICK CELLULOSE INC	\$4,505,501
GEORGIA POWER COMPANY	\$2,934,574
SEA ISLAND COMPANY, INC	\$1,157,363
LIVEOAK FIBER.	\$438,850
SEA ISLAND ACQUISITION	\$436,146
SYMRISE.	\$349,763
ET WALKERS POINT POE LP	\$345,134
RICH PRODUCTS	\$360,032
KING & PRINCE SEAFOOD.....	\$347,714
VKS QOZB LLC.....	\$342,007





AVIATION SUPPORT

Wings of Grace Ministries

Wings of Grace Ministries, owned and operated by Damon Whitlow, provides a six-week introductory program designed to serve as a gateway into aviation maintenance careers. Through classroom instruction and hands-on experience, participants gain foundational knowledge of aircraft systems, maintenance procedures, safety protocols, and regulatory standards.

Problem:

The west-facing exterior of the Wings of Grace facility at the Golden Isles Airport had deteriorated metal and faded paint. Because the building is positioned prominently between two Gulfstream facilities, its condition affected the appearance of the surrounding airport campus.

Solution:

GIDA awarded Wings of Grace Ministries a \$10,000 Share the Future Fund Grant to support metal repairs, repainting, and related exterior improvements at the facility. The grant contributed toward a total project investment of approximately \$20,000.

Results:

The improvements will enhance the facility's appearance, strengthen its alignment with neighboring aviation businesses, and create a more professional and welcoming environment for students, visitors, and the broader community.



“

“The Share the Future support enabled our organization to make several important improvements to our facility, including painting the building, repairing the roof, and restoring our sign.

These projects have enhanced the appearance, safety, and functionality of our location while increasing our visibility within the community. The improvements have created a more welcoming environment for the young people, families, volunteers, and community members we serve, allowing us to better fulfill our mission and make a lasting impact.”

~ Damon Whitlow
CFO , Wings of Grace Ministries

”



EMBRACING ACCOUNTABILITY

Funding Sources

Contract with Glynn County	38%
Interest Collected	48%
FTZ Revenue	3.5%
Lease Payments	10%
Sale of Assets	.5%

Funding Uses

Operational Costs	58%
Capital Improvements	20%
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 \$95,000 directly into the local economy through its Share the Future Initiative. In total, at least 70% 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.





PLACEMAKING

La Playa Park

La Playa Park transformed previously vacant and underutilized properties along Norwich Street into an inviting destination for businesses, residents, and visitors in Downtown Brunswick. Owned and operated by Joe Cascio and Meredith Grill, the project brought new life to an important commercial corridor and supported continued revitalization throughout the downtown district.

Problem: The properties required exterior improvements—including new signage, lighting, landscaping, and other visual enhancements—to create a more welcoming environment and strengthen their visibility and competitiveness.

Solution: GIDA awarded The Park a \$10,000 Share the Future Fund Grant to support improvements to the buildings and surrounding property. The investment helped enhance the overall appearance of the site and complemented the owners' broader revitalization efforts.

Results: The improvements increased the attractiveness and marketability of the properties, creating a stronger setting for current and future businesses. By turning formerly overlooked spaces into a more vibrant destination, La Playa Park contributed to the continued growth and revitalization of Downtown Brunswick.





YOUR PROGRESS, OUR PURPOSE

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

- GIDA Finalizes Eastgate Sale
- Glynn County Schools Earns Economic Development Partnership Certification
- Fourth Annual Industry Appreciation Dinner
- GIDA Expands Industrial Portfolio with Mallard Industrial Park Acquisition
- Amazon Opens New Fullfillment Center in Glynn County
- PROponents Opens 500,000-Square-Foot Facility
- Hillpointe Expands at Tradewinds Technology Park
- Georgia Breakbulk Named CSX Select Site
- Lucas Center for Entrepreneurship Celebrates National Small Business Week
- Golden Isles College and Career Academy Celebrates National Signing Day
- Georgia Trend Highlights Golden Isles Economic Growth
- Mallard Industrial Park Receives RSDI Grant
- Golden Isles Development Authority Announces Elevate Glynn Initiative



Your Progress explained...

GIDA Finalizes Eastgate Sale - August 2025: GIDA finalized the sale of Eastgate Commerce Park to Georgia-based developer and investor Calvin Collins, positioning the six-acre, development-ready property for new commercial and industrial growth in Glynn County. Located along U.S. Highway 17 near the Brunswick Golden Isles Airport, the planned campus will offer flexible building spaces ranging from 5,000 to 30,000 square feet for light industrial, advanced manufacturing, logistics, breakbulk, third-party logistics and technology-enabled operations.

Glynn County Schools Earns Economic Development Partnership Certification - September 2025: Glynn County Schools earned the Georgia Department of Education's Economic Development Partnership Certification, recognizing its strong collaboration with GIDA, the Golden Isles College and Career Academy, the Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce and local industry partners. The designation highlights the school system's commitment to aligning career education with regional workforce needs and preparing students with the skills and hands-on experience needed to succeed in local industries.

Fourth Annual Industry Appreciation Dinner - October 2025: GIDA hosted its Fourth Annual Industry Appreciation Dinner at Silver Bluff Brewing Company, bringing together business and community leaders to recognize the companies and individuals driving growth across the Golden Isles. Honorees included Brands for Innovation Excellence, Gulfstream Aerospace Corporation as Manufacturer of the Year, Bruce Dixon as the Dave Smith Award recipient and Silver Bluff Brewing Company as Locally Grown Manufacturer of the Year. The event also highlighted strong industry momentum, including 42 new projects initiated, 45 attraction activities, 51 industrial business visits and a 100% increase in digital engagement.

GIDA Expands Industrial Portfolio with Mallard Industrial Park Acquisition - October 2025: GIDA expanded Glynn County's industrial site portfolio with the acquisition of more than 250 acres off Highway 82 near Interstate 95 Exit 29, now known as Mallard Industrial Park. The site fills an important gap in the community's inventory by offering a flexible option for advanced manufacturing, logistics, and other industries requiring smaller footprints and efficient access to major transportation assets. Located just minutes from Interstate 95 and the Port of Brunswick, the park provides strong connectivity to regional, domestic, and international markets. Engineering and site preparation are underway as GIDA works to position Mallard Industrial Park for future development and recruitment opportunities.

Amazon Locates to Glynn County - December 2025: Amazon expanded its presence in Georgia with the opening of a new 58,000-square-foot last-mile delivery station in Brunswick, creating more than 100 jobs and driver opportunities for the region. Located on GA Highway 99, the facility strengthens Amazon's delivery network while bringing new investment and employment opportunities to Glynn County. The project reflects the continued momentum of the Golden Isles as a location for logistics and distribution operations and highlights the strong partnerships between Amazon, GIDA, Glynn County, and the City of Brunswick.

PROponents Opens 500,000-Square-Foot Facility at Tradewinds Technology Park - December 2025: PROponents, a subsidiary of Hillpointe, opened its new 500,000-square-foot distribution center and office facility at Tradewinds Technology Park. As the first operational building within the park, the facility supports approximately 100 employees and strengthens the company's sourcing, logistics, and delivery capabilities across the Southeast. The project marks a major milestone for Tradewinds and adds new jobs and industrial activity to Glynn County.

Your Progress explained...

Hillpointe Expands at Tradewinds Technology Park - December 2025: Hillpointe broke ground on a new 130,000-square-foot speculative distribution facility at Tradewinds Technology Park, further expanding its investment in Glynn County. Expected to be completed in Q4 2026, the building will provide flexible, ready-to-occupy industrial space designed to attract new employers and additional capital investment to the Golden Isles.

Georgia Breakbulk Names CSX Select Site - March 2026: Georgia Breakbulk Logistics Park earned a Bronze CSX Select Site designation, recognizing the property as one of a select group of highly prepared rail-served industrial sites across the CSX network. The designation strengthens the park's visibility among manufacturers and site selectors while highlighting Glynn County's continued investment in site readiness and industrial development.

Lucas Center Celebrates National Small Business Week - May 2026: The Lucas Center for Entrepreneurship celebrated National Small Business Week with a week of events supporting entrepreneurs across coastal Georgia, including pitch competitions, networking opportunities, educational programs, and its annual Entrepreneurship Awards. Participants from 6SEED, ACCELER8, and ACCELER8 NonProfit competed for more than \$50,000 in prizes, while local entrepreneurs and organizations were recognized for their leadership and contributions to the region's small business community.

GICCA Celebrates National Signing Day - May 2026: The Golden Isles College and Career Academy (GICCA) hosted its annual Signing Day ceremony on May 5, 2026, at the newly commissioned CCGA Center for the Arts, celebrating students' achievements and their new opportunities with local employers. This event was held in conjunction with SkillsUSA's National Signing Day, a nationwide celebration where thousands of trades students across the country officially commit to careers in skilled trades.

Georgia Trend Highlights Golden Isles Economic Growth - June 2026: The June 2026 issue of Georgia Trend featured the Golden Isles as a growing hub for aerospace, logistics, manufacturing, and economic development. The article highlighted major regional assets, including the Port of Brunswick, Brunswick-Golden Isles Airport, Innovation Isles Aerospace Park, Interstate 95, and the community's expanding inventory of industrial sites, reinforcing Glynn County's position as a competitive location for investment.

Mallard Industrial Park Receives RSDI Grant - June 2026: In June 2026, the Golden Isles Development Authority was awarded funding through Georgia's Rural Site Development Initiative (RSDI) to support continued development of Mallard Industrial Park. The investment will help advance critical site-readiness efforts and move the property closer to Georgia Ready for Accelerated Development (GRAD) certification, strengthening Glynn County's inventory of competitive industrial sites and positioning the community for future business attraction and investment.

GIDA Announces Elevate Glynn Initiative - June 2026: GIDA announced the launch of Elevate Glynn, a \$1 million community investment initiative designed to support local entrepreneurs and small businesses. The program expands access to capital through an Impact Loan Fund, Revolving Loan Fund, and matching grant opportunities, strengthening Glynn County's entrepreneurial ecosystem and supporting long-term business growth and job creation.

Looking Ahead

Strategic Vision 2026-2027

In July 2026, the GIDA Board of Governors and staff reaffirmed the organization's strategic direction and established priorities for fiscal year 2026. The planning process focused on business attraction, talent development, site development, and business retention, while identifying new opportunities to strengthen industry engagement and regional competitiveness.

Target Industry Strategy

GIDA will continue refining its targeted business attraction strategy with an emphasis on industries that align with the Golden Isles' existing assets and competitive advantages. Strategic priorities include strengthening relationships with site selection consultants, advancing aerospace opportunities, exploring Jacksonville as a potential business recruitment market, and evaluating opportunities related to data center development.

Talent Attraction & Retention

Attracting and retaining a strong workforce remains a key priority for GIDA. The Authority will explore best practices for talent attraction, engage local employers to better understand workforce needs, strengthen partnerships around workforce programming, and identify opportunities to connect transitioning military personnel with careers in the Golden Isles. These efforts will also support broader promotion of the community as a place to live, work, and stay.

Industry Leader Roundtables

Beginning in the coming year, GIDA will introduce industry roundtables designed to bring existing employers and community leaders together for focused conversations around business needs, workforce challenges, growth opportunities, and the overall business climate. The goal is to strengthen communication, encourage collaboration, and ensure GIDA remains responsive to the needs of local industry.



WE INVEST in our community

As we reflect on another year of progress in Glynn County, I am proud of the momentum our community continues to build and the role the Golden Isles Development Authority plays in creating opportunities for long-term economic growth.

This year was marked by continued investment, expansion and collaboration. From supporting existing industries to advancing new projects and preparing sites for future development, GIDA remained focused on strengthening Glynn County's competitive position. These efforts resulted in more than \$70 million in new investment, 90 new jobs and five local business expansions, while continuing to build a strong pipeline of opportunities.

Economic development is about more than individual projects. This year, GIDA continued advancing the market readiness of our industrial sites, strengthening relationships with companies and site-selection partners, and supporting infrastructure improvements that position Glynn County for future investment.

We also remained committed to the people and businesses that call our community home. Workforce initiatives connected students, educators and employers, while our continued support of entrepreneurship and small business—including the launch of Elevate Glynn, a \$1 million community investment initiative—strengthened another important part of our local economy.

The accomplishments highlighted throughout this Year in Review are made possible by strong partnerships among our local governments, educational institutions, business community, state partners and community leaders.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to thank the GIDA team and our many partners for their continued dedication. With a strong economic foundation, strategic investments and a collaborative approach to growth, Glynn County is well positioned for a prosperous future.

Respectfully,

Bill Dawson
2025-2026 Chairman
GIDA Board of Governors





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