



**CEO/Executive Director Position Available - Apply by October 7, 2016**



*Headquartered in Savannah, GA - Estimated Population Served: 286,900*

Chatham County is one of the oldest counties in the United States having been created in 1777. The County is one of America's friendliest and most beautiful areas. In fact, the county seat, Savannah, was recently ranked No. 3 as "a top place to visit" in the World's Best Cities in the U.S. and Canada! (Travel + Leisure, 2014). Residents simply love to share the charm of their area – hospitality is an art form and found at every turn!

The deliberate attention to, and pride in the way the county presents itself, extends to the founding of Savannah as the capital of the 13th colony of Georgia. Claiming the land for King George in 1733, Gen. James Oglethorpe carefully plotted out the city's plan to include a series of 24 neighborhoods built around central, public squares. They continue to help make Savannah a delightful place to tour on foot.

Area tourism continues to break records each year as millions of visitors enjoy its stunning architecture and historic buildings. In 2014, Chatham County welcomed more than 13.4 million visitors, including 7.6 million overnight guests and 5.8 million day-trippers, who together generated \$2.5 billion in visitor spending. Hotel/motel tax collections for the city of Savannah, Chatham



County and Tybee Island also hit new records at \$18.2 million. Tourism and hospitality continue to be one of the largest economic drivers for the area.

Learning opportunities abound in the county with some very good public schools, a multitude of private schools, several diverse universities and a technical college. More than 35,000 students reside within a 50-mile radius, while pursuing a post-secondary education at more than 20 institutions of higher learning; from Armstrong State University and Savannah State University to the Savannah College of Art and Design, the Savannah Law School, South University, Savannah Technical College, Georgia Southern University. Both Mercer University and the Medical College of Georgia have medical schools here.

Chatham County is a place to live, and thrive! Savannah was ranked in the 10 best Southern Small Towns (USA Today, 2015) and the Top 10 of America's Happiest Seaside Towns (Coastal Living, 2015). With a cost of living below the national average (92.0 compared to 101.6 for Atlanta and 100 nationally), you can choose between surrounding yourself with history, stepping back into small-town America, enjoying the security and luxury of a gated community, or a laid-back bungalow overlooking the marsh. Reasonably nice homes can be purchased for \$150,000 to \$500,000.

Culture thrives in the area – Savannah has, for example, twice as many art galleries per capita as New York City! The Telfair Museum of Art is the South's oldest art museum. Built in 1819, it was a private home to the Telfair family until 1875 when it was willed over to the Georgia Historical Society. The museum now houses an impressive collection of more than 4,500 works of fine art.

Chatham County offers many opportunities to enjoy the water, from fishing to sailing the Intracoastal Waterway. Tybee Island hosts one of the 10 Best Southern Beaches (USA Today, 2014). Once a quiet beach town, Tybee is now a popular vacation destination offering five





miles of sandy beaches and historic attractions like Fort Pulaski and the Tybee Island Light Station. Residents and tourists enjoy locally caught seafood, year-round festivals and events in a laid-back atmosphere. The sand and surf activities include paddle boarding, bodysurfing, kayaking, dolphin tours, relaxation in the sand, or activities on “Savannah’s beach,” such as bocce, competitive volleyball and aerial kiteboarding.

Outdoor enthusiasts can charter a boat and fish the Gulf Stream, or take an eco-tour of Georgia’s beautiful barrier islands. The pristine coastline is known as the ocean’s nursery, where miles of marshland serve as a breeding and feeding ground for thousands of species from land, air, and sea. The Savannah National Wildlife Refuge has 29,000 acres of tidal marshes, rivers, and streams.

For travelers, the county has a spectacular airport, offering non-stop flights to Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas, Detroit, Chicago, New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, DC on American, Delta and United Airlines.

Sultry summers, oaks dripping with Spanish moss and grand antebellum manors are the quintessential elements that govern the South. The charm of Chatham County makes it a wonderful place to visit or live. Whether you want beauty, culture, eccentricity, friendliness, or just to slow down the pace – you can have it all in Chatham County!

## HISTORY OF CHATHAM AREA TRANSIT

The story of public transportation in Savannah began in 1869 with the formation of the Savannah-Skidaway and Seaboard Railway Company, which was to provide inter-city streetcar service. The first cars were drawn by one horse each and had room for twelve seated passengers.

In 1890, electric streetcar began operations. The coming of the twentieth century saw the consolidation of the major local railway properties under the newly created Savannah Electric Company which handled all lighting, power, and transit operations.

The electric streetcars continued to flourish through the 1920’s and 1930’s but were eventually overtaken by buses going into the 1940’s. In January 1946, the Savannah Electric and Power Company sold its holdings to the Savannah Transit Company (STC). On August 26, 1946, the last streetcar operated in Savannah.

In July 1961, the Savannah Transit Authority (STA) was created by state legislation to take over for the private Savannah Transit Company. At that time, transit operations were still a break-even and sometimes profit-making service. That did not last with labor, fuel and equipment costs rising. Additionally, the greater availability of automobiles resulted in declining passenger levels through the 1960’s. By the 1970’s, federal and local subsidies were needed to keep the buses rolling.

In 1986, with steadily worsening operating and financial conditions, the state of Georgia passed legislation that allowed new transit authorities to be established and the creation of a transit service district along with a dedicated property tax to stabilize funding for its operations. In 1986, the Savannah Transit Authority ceased to exist and the Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT) officially came into existence on January 9, 1987.

In 1989, the American Public Transportation Association presented CAT with the “Outstanding Public Transportation Achievement Award” for small transit systems. This award acknowledged CAT as the best transit system in its size category in North America.

In 1999, CAT and the City of Savannah signed an agreement that allowed CAT to operate its downtown CAT Shuttle serving both residents and visitors fare-free.

In 2000 CAT installed bicycle racks on all buses in its fleet. In 2001, CAT purchased and placed into operation two trolley replicas on the CAT Shuttle route. That same year, CAT took over the operation of the Savannah Belles Ferry system which carries visitors, employees, and residents between Hutchinson Island and River Street.

In 2006, CAT saw the delivery of five new 30 ft. and five new 35 ft. low-floor buses to replace buses ready for retirement. Also delivered were eight new replacement Teleride vans to transport people with disabilities.

In 2009, CAT received a federal grant to purchase its first eleven hybrid buses. In February 2012, CAT held a ground-breaking ceremony for its first downtown intermodal center. Almost simultaneously, reconstruction of CAT’s primary offices and facilities began. The ground-breaking for the Operations & Maintenance Facility was held in May, 2012. Both projects have been completed.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE REGION

Chatham County lies on the Savannah River, located approximately 20 miles upriver from the Atlantic Ocean and is on the border between South Carolina and Georgia. The county covers 632 square miles of which 426 square miles are land and 206 square miles are covered in water. The Port of Savannah is the primary port on the Savannah River and the largest port in the state of Georgia. The U.S. Intracoastal Waterway is located nearby.

Chatham County, along with Bryan and Effingham Counties, comprise the “Savannah Metropolitan Statistical Area.” Jacksonville, FL, is two hours south, Atlanta three and a half hours northwest, Orlando, FL, four hours south and Hilton Head is just under an hour northeast.

Table 1: Chatham County Demographics

2015 Estimated Population: 286,956			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
Caucasian	54.0%	0 to 15	21.0%
African American	39.8%	15 to 35	29.8%
Asian	2.5%	35 to 55	27.7%
Some Other Race	1.6%	55 to 75	15.4%
Two or More Races	2.1%	75 and Older	6.1%

Ethnicity		Median Age	
Hispanic-All Races	5.8%	Chatham Co.	34.2
All Others	94.2%	U.S.	37.4

Educational Achievement (over age 25)	
High School or Higher	88.7%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	34.0%

Income	
Median Household Income	\$46,967
Mean Household Income	\$64,240
Percent Below Poverty Level	17.9 %

Source: U.S. Census, 2014-2015 Estimates

DEMOGRAPHICS

See Table 1 (lower left) for Chatham County Demographics.

CLIMATE

Chatham County has a semi-tropical climate with usually warm, and frequently hot, humid weather throughout the year. The average temperatures are 49.2° F in January; 81.2° F in July; with an annual average of 66.4° F. During seven months of the year the average temperature is 70 degrees or higher, with July, the warmest month, reaching an average day time high temperature of 92° F. Summer afternoon showers often bring a little reprieve from the temperatures. The annual precipitation is 49 inches, with the driest month in November at 2.4 inches, and the wettest in August at 7.20 inches. The county rarely receives snow.

COMMERCE

The area’s economy is based on six key components. The first is manufacturing. Following recent years’ announcements of \$1 billion in facility expansion and the addition of more than 4,000 new jobs, the manufacturing sector is doing very well. Among others, Gulfstream Aerospace is headquartered here and is the area’s largest single employer.

The Port of Savannah is the second component. It is already ranked fourth in North America in terms of container traffic and is among the fastest growing. It offers 9,700 feet of contiguous birthing space and over three million square feet of warehouse space is available within 30 miles of the port. Two major railroads, the Norfolk Southern and CSX, as well as Interstates 16 and 95, serve the Port.

The third component is tourism and the fourth is the military. Hunter Army Airfield lies within the county’s boundaries and is home to approximately 5,000 service men and women and units of the Army, Air National Guard and Coast Guard, and complements Fort Stewart in neighboring Hinesville, GA.

Fifth is education. As noted previously, the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) has a significant presence in the community and hosts 12,000 students. Armstrong State University enjoys an enrollment of over 6,300 and Savannah State University, established in 1890 and the oldest public historically black college or university

in Georgia, enrolls 4,900. In all, 35,000 students attend colleges and universities in Chatham County or within a 50-mile radius.

Sixth is medical. Two nationally recognized medical centers deliver top-quality health care in the city: Memorial University Medical Center and the St. Joseph's/Candler Health System. They attract people from southeast Georgia and the southern coast of South Carolina.

## CHATHAM AREA TRANSIT

Chatham Area Transit (CAT) currently provides approximately 3.3 million passenger trips annually. It does so through 66 buses serving 19 lines. It also offers short term bicycle rentals, paratransit (32 small buses providing door-to-door service for those with qualifying disabilities) and a free downtown bus and ferry system, the latter between Hutchinson Island and Savannah.

CAT is governed by a Board composed of nine members who represent Chatham County, the City of Savannah, and the communities therein (including the elderly and disabled). All the Board Members have the best interests of the community at heart and none view CAT as a stepping stone to higher office. They are collegial and work well together. They respect each other and think highly of the authority's staff.

CAT has an operating budget of \$21.8 million for FY 2017 and a capital program of \$5.8 million. Its principle revenue sources are: fares (\$2.86 million), other agencies (such as Savannah and Chatham County - \$5.6 million), tax revenue (\$9.64 million) and grants (\$3.46 million).

The Authority has a staff of 244 employees. The basic units are:

- Operations (107 FT and eight PT fixed-route bus operators, 26 FT and 3 PT paratransit drivers, nine Transportation Supervisors, one Transportation Manager)
- Maintenance (37 FT and four PT employees)
- Marine Services (ferries) (seven FT and nine PT employees)
- Call Center fielding approximately 8,000 calls per month (with nine FT and one PT employees)
- Finance Department (9 FT and 1 PT employees)

- System Development (six FT employees)
- Executive Department (five FT and 1 PT employees)
- Safety, Training & Environmental Services (three FT employees)
- Human Resources (two FT employees).

All are very knowledgeable and dedicated to performing their duties in an exemplary fashion. The Amalgamated Transit Union represents fixed-route Bus Operators, Maintenance employees and paratransit Teleride Drivers. The fixed-route/maintenance contract is in force from July 2015 to June 2019 and the paratransit contract from September 2013 to August 2017.

## THE ISSUES

Last December, the then CEO and the Maintenance Director were indicted in a bribery and a kickback scheme and both were sentenced in July 2016. The fallout for CAT has been significant. Most importantly, the public's faith in the agency was damaged and its image harmed. While those involved were small in number and they are no longer with the agency, the current overriding issue is restoring CAT to its previous level of trust among local residents and local, state and federal officials.

The second issue is 60% of CAT's bus fleet is beyond its recommended useful life. Progress has been made. In June the state of Georgia awarded CAT a \$13 million grant to purchase 26 new buses. Additionally, 14 buses are being rehabilitated. When the new buses are acquired and the rehabilitations completed, the fleet will be in relatively good condition albeit with some room for improvement.

The third issue is financial viability. In the short term, CAT needs to optimize its use of resources in delivering its services. It must ensure it achieves the ideal balance between service (hours of operation, routes, and quality) and revenues (fares, taxes, agency revenues and grants).

In the long term, outside funding sources are not guaranteed. Pressures always exist to keep taxes low and other funding sources are likely to face increasing limited resources. Hence the agency needs to focus on finding alternative, reliable revenue streams. These may involve public/private partnerships and economic development. CAT is interested in particular in exploring Transit Oriented Development and working with local governments to build

better communities. This effort may include cooperating with other governments to maximize the utility of HUD funds.

Related to the prior issue is the potential expansion of service. When the authority was formed as a transit district, a number of communities in the area elected not to participate. These include Pooler, Port Wentworth, Bloomingdale and part of Garden City. Further, none of the nearby counties participate in the authority. As the population of the region grows, it will be important to expand beyond the transit district's current boundaries to provide service and alleviate traffic. CAT has in fact had some very preliminary discussions with some of these communities. The goal should be to make CAT a regional transportation system, not one that serves just the city.

Finally, CAT is eager to encourage a culture of customer service and change. Some progress has been made here but ideally more will be made.

## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

CAT is seeking a strong, energetic, proactive leader who is passionate about his/her job and who will work with the Board to make CAT the preeminent transit authority in the nation. Capitalizing on the agency's potential simply requires an individual with vision to partner with the board, local officials and the community to take it to the next level and beyond. That effort will involve doing the hard work of analyzing situations, developing options, advising/educating the public, working with other governments and following through.

The CEO will be a team builder and create consensus around plans that will make CAT the best it can be. He/she will be totally transparent and work diligently to keep the Board and the public fully informed. There will be no surprises. The ideal candidate will be confident and comfortable telling the Board what it needs to hear, not what it might like to hear. Given CAT's recent past, the next CEO will be someone of the highest character, someone whose integrity is above reproach, and someone without any hint of scandal.

The individual will be someone who takes a fresh look at the organization and who is always looking for ways to improve processes and services. The manager will be a problem solver with a holistic perspective. The ideal candidate will

recognize trends, anticipate outcomes and take action to ameliorate situations before they become dilemmas. He/she will acknowledge that bureaucracy has its place while realizing it is not applicable in every situation and at times needs to be overruled by common sense. When faced with an issue, the individual will fix the problem.

The CEO will engage the community and be an ambassador for CAT. He/she will be a people person with outstanding communications skills, will be open minded, will listen carefully and will evaluate every situation before acting. At the same time, he/she will be decisive. When something needs to be done, the individual will not dilly dally. Customer service will be important and he/she will lead by example. Customers are not always right but need to be treated with dignity and respect, and will appreciate a good faith effort in finding a solution to their problems. He/she will realize the community values reliability and predictability. He/she will be very comfortable with the media.

The individual will understand human behavior and motivation. He/she will be a mentor and encourage the staff members to realize their full potential. The ideal candidate will be firm and fair with a good sense of humor. The CEO will set expectations, provide resources, step back and let employees do their jobs. The individual will be collaborative and a team builder, not a micromanager. Instead, he/she will expect to be informed, insist deadlines be met and hold staff members accountable for results.

In terms of knowledge and experience, the ideal candidate will have a background well-grounded in all aspects of public transportation – operations, maintenance, system development, finance (including funding mechanisms) and community and intergovernmental relations. As noted, CAT's future success will be dependent upon its ability to leverage its resources with those of others to achieve synergy.

The ideal candidate will have a Bachelor's degree in business administration, public administration, transportation or related field, and seven to ten years of increasingly responsible experience as a senior level transportation agency executive.

## INTERNAL CANDIDATES

We anticipate having at least one internal candidate.





## COMPENSATION

The starting salary range is targeted to be \$120,000 to \$180,000. Fringe benefits are generous.

## RESIDENCY

Residency within the county limits is not required but expected. Employee must be available to respond in case of an emergency.

## HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your resume and cover letter to [Recruit43@cb-asso.com](mailto:Recruit43@cb-asso.com) on or before October 7th. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Rick Conner at (941) 896-7001 or Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537.

## THE PROCESS

Candidates will be screened in October and early November. It is anticipated that interviews will be held in mid-November and a selection made shortly thereafter.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Applicants' names will not be released without first obtaining the permission of the candidate. That likely will not occur until after the finalists have been selected and interviewed.

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

CAT is an Equal Opportunity Employer and encourages women, minorities and veterans to apply.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about CAT, visit:

<http://www.catchacat.org/>



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