Welcome to the city of
Savannah, Georgia

CITY OF
savannah

Estimated 2016 Population: 146,763

Savannah is one of America's friendliest and most beautiful cities, and proud to be ranked No. 3 as "a top place to visit" in the World's Best Cities in the U.S. and Canada! (Travel + Leisure 2014). Having earned its nickname, "The Hostess City," for the way Savannahians love to share the charm of their hometown, hospitality is an art form and found at every turn! Savannah evokes a distinct image of southern charm, just by mentioning its name, and the city delivers on that image and more, often providing a surprise or two along the way – like that of being ranked the Most Romantic American City (Trivago.com, 2015).
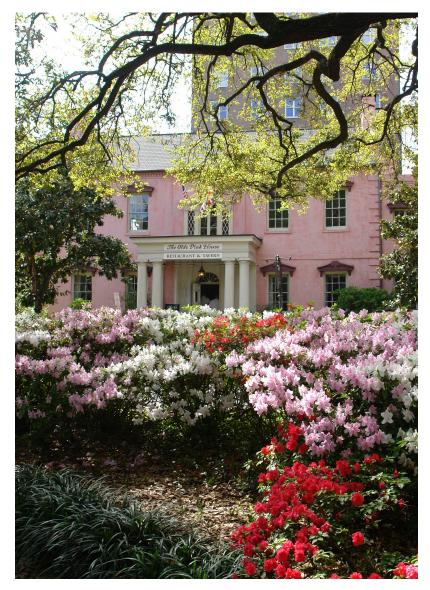
The deliberate attention to, and pride in the way Savannah presents herself, extends from its founding as the capital of the 13th colony of Georgia. Claiming the land for King George in 1733, Gen. James Oglethorpe carefully plotted out the city plan to include a series of 24 neighborhoods built around central, public squares. They continue to help make Savannah such a delightful place to tour on foot. It is noted for being one of America's greenest, most pedestrian-friendly cities. Each

square and its surroundings create districts with distinctive characteristics and make the city the largest landmark historic district in the nation! Savannah is the fourth Best Historic City, (USA Today, 2014) and since its founding has been an axis of shipping, manufacturing, urban planning, arts and culture.

Specialized tours of all varieties throughout the city are guided by local experts who delight in sharing the treasures of this jewel of the South. The distinguished ranks of antebellum mansions are the backbone of many of these tours, all showcasing fascinating stories and glimpses into the past. Savannah is a place steeped in history, legend and tradition but at the same time, very dynamic and forward-thinking.

Tourism continues to break records each year as millions of visitors enjoy the city's stunning architecture and historic buildings. In 2014, Savannah 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. Savannah's tourism and hospitality industry continues to be one of the largest economic drivers for the city, whose population is just under 150,000. A long-term management plan is being composed that will assure the tourism industry's continued vitality and growth while protecting the very charm and culture that most visitors come to Savannah to experience.

Bolstered by its tourism industry and a growing port, the city benefits from an economy that's greatly diversified in its industries, including small businesses, health care, large-scale

manufacturing and military operations. Along with a storied military history from the Revolutionary War to the Mighty Eighth Air Force, the city is home to Hunter Army Airfield, a vital hub of the Fort Stewart complex, the largest military installation east of the Mississippi River.

Learning opportunities abound in Savannah with an award-winning public school system, 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.

Savannah is a place to live, and thrive! The city 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.

Savannah presents a variety of festivals accenting every month of the year. Celebrate film, literature, art, food, and heritage by stepping out for seasonal events like the world-class Savannah Music Festival, which takes place in venues all over town every spring. This legacy features nearly 600 artists in free and ticketed concerts, classes, lectures and workshops for just about every possible musical taste. Other significant festivals include the annual Savannah Jazz Festival and The Black Heritage Festival. The second largest St. Patrick's Day celebration in the country takes place here, tied to the mid-1800s when the city became a top destination for those fleeing the Irish potato famines. The St. Patrick's city-wide event is arguably the Southeast's biggest annual bash, with music, athletic contests, and its signature parade, 300 units strong.

Culture thrives in Savannah, with 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.

City Market enjoys the ambiance of its unique history. In 1755, it was a needed gathering place where farmers, fishermen, tradesmen and vendors assembled for commerce. The area has evolved over time, to a dressing station during the Civil War Siege of Savannah and is now a vibrant shopping district with galleries, gifts, and other favorite finds in every quaint alleyway. Experience coastal cuisine and southern cooking at one of the many eating establishments throughout the city and then enjoy fashion forward Broughton Street, the décor houses of the Downtown Design District, and the antique and art boutiques that line the squares. Or, hop a trolley, enjoy a horse-drawn carriage or board a ferry at River Street in the city's historic waterfront area and enjoy the panoramic view from the Savannah River.

Savannah offers many opportunities to enjoy the water, from fishing to sailing the Intracoastal Waterway. Tybee Island is only 20 minutes east of downtown Savannah and 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. 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. Enjoy the beach any time during the year. Tybee Island it is ranked No. 4 in the 16 Best (Affordable!) Winter Vacations

in America (Budget Travel, 2014). 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. Or, enjoy getting an up-close and personal experience at Georgia's oldest saltwater aquarium, The Skidaway Marine Science Center.

For travelers, the city 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 Savannah, which has the intimacy of a small city but the experienced background of a much larger one, makes for 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 Savannah!

HISTORY

General James Oglethorpe and settlers from the ship Anne landed at Yamacraw Bluff, located about 12 miles upriver on the Savannah River, on February 12, 1733. They were greeted by Tomochichi, the head chief of a Yamacraw tribe, and Indian trader John Musgrove. The colony of Georgia and the city of Savannah were founded on that date.

Savannah was named for the Savannah River, which most likely derived from various names for the Shawnee, the Native American people who migrated to the river in the 1680s. Another theory is that the name Savannah refers to the extensive marshlands surrounding the river for miles inland and is derived from the English term "savanna", a tropical grassland.

In 1751, Savannah and the rest of Georgia became a Royal Colony and the city was made the colonial capital of Georgia. By the time of the American Revolutionary War, it had become the southernmost commercial port of the Thirteen Colonies. British troops claimed possession in 1778, and the following year a combined force of American and French soldiers failed to defeat the British at the Siege of Savannah, which allowed the British to stay until July of 1782.

Savannah continued as a prosperous seaport throughout the 19th Century, and was the Confederacy's sixth most populous city. The city was the prime objective of General William T. Sherman's "March to the Sea", the name given the Union Army's military Savannah Campaign in the Civil War. He and Union commander Lt. General Ulysses S. Grant believed the Civil War would end only if the Confederacy's strategic, economic, and psychological capacity for warfare was broken. The campaign began when Sherman's troops left the captured city of Atlanta, on Nov. 15, 1864, and ended with the capture of the port of Savannah on Dec. 21. On that morning, local authorities negotiated a peaceful surrender to save Savannah from destruction and Union troops marched into the city at dawn.

Over the next 150 years, Savannah developed into the industrial center and Atlantic seaport it is today. It is Georgia's fourth-largest city and third-largest metropolitan area.

GEOGRAPHY

Savannah lies on the Savannah River, located in Chatham County, approximately 20 miles upriver from the Atlantic Ocean and 20 miles south of the border between South Carolina and Georgia.

The city has a total of 108.7 square miles; 103.1 square miles of land and 5.6 square miles covered in water. 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. As Savannah

is prone to flooding, five canals and several pumping stations have been built to help reduce the effects.

The Savannah Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) comprises Chatham, Bryan, and Effingham counties. Liberty and Long counties complete the geographic boundary of the Savannah / Hinesville / Ft. Stewart combined MSA. 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.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1: Savannah Demographics

Estimated 2016 Population: 146,763			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
Caucasian	40.7%	0 to 15	18.4%
African American	54.3%	15 to 25	19.8%
Asian	2.2%	25 to 45	27.7%
Native American	0.3%	45 to 65	22.1%
Two or More Races	2.5%	65 to 85	9.9%
Total	100%	85 and Older	2.1%
Hispanic (all races)	4.9%		

Educational Achievement (*over age 25*)	
High School or Higher	85.5%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	27.0%

Other Statistics	
Median Age-Savannah	31.4
Median Age-U.S.	37.4
Poverty Rate	17.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

CLIMATE

Savannah 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 with 2.4 inches, and the wettest in August at 7.20. Savannah rarely receives snow.

COMMERCE

Savannah'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 the largest single container terminal in North America and 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. More than 29 million tons, or 8 percent of all containerized cargo in the United States, traveled through the Port to and from more than 150 countries. In October 2014, the $700 million Savannah Harbor Expansion Project was given the green-light. It will deepen the Savannah River channel to 47 feet and enable the port to more efficiently serve the larger new Panamax vessels expected to call in greater numbers after the expansion of the Panama Canal is completed.

The third component is tourism. In addition to what is already here, five new hotels are either planned or under

construction. The fourth component is the military. Hunter Army Airfield lies within the city limits. It is home to approximately 5,000 service men and women and units of the Army, Air National Guard and Coast Guard and compliments 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. It does not have a traditional campus but since its being founded in 1978, has purchased over 60 buildings in the city's core and renovated them—making SCAD a major part of Savannah's redevelopment. 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 (HBCU) in Georgia, enrolls 4,900. In all, 35,000 students attend colleges and universities in Savannah or within a 50-mile.

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. These centers, and the advanced medical specialties they offer, attract people from southeast Georgia and the southern coast of South Carolina. The medical facilities are also the leading private non-manufacturing employers in the metropolitan area. Each hosts medical schools with a branch of the Medical College of Georgia at Memorial and a branch of Mercer University at Candler.

THE GOVERNMENT

Savannah follows the Council/Manager form of government. The city council is nonpartisan and composed of nine members. The mayor and two aldermen (city council members) are elected at large. The remaining six aldermen are elected by district. Terms are four years and all are elected at the same time in November of the year preceding the U.S. presidential election. Each member of the council (including the mayor) has one vote, although the mayor can veto ordinances and resolutions.

The last election was in 2015 in which four new members (including the mayor) were elected. Although they still are developing relationships among themselves, they care about their community and while they differ on approach and methods, all want the best for their city. They have a high regard for the city staff. The council appoints the city manager, city attorney, and clerk of council. The city manager provides administrative leadership and manages the day-to-day functions of the city. Savannah provides all the typical city services as well as some others. Specifically, these services include: Community and Economic Development; Finance; Fire/EMS; Leisure Services (including recreation, facilities maintenance,

Table 2: Principal Employers, Savannah, GA

Employer	Industry	Employees
Gulfstream Aerospace	Aerospace	9,878
Memorial Health University Medical Center	Health Care	5,000
Savannah-Chatham Board of Education	Education	4,808
Fort Stewart / Hunter Army Airfield	Military	4,637
St. Joseph / Candler Health System	Health Care	3,304
City of Savannah	Government	2,795
Savannah College of Art and Design	Education	1,590
Chatham County	Government	1,578
Georgia Ports Authority	Government	988
International Paper	Manufacturing	661

Source: City of Savannah, 2014 CAFR

cemeteries, therapeutic recreation, marina, civic center and golf course); Police (the city and county jointly fund the police department but management currently falls under the city manager, though work is underway to de-merge the department into separate City and County departments); Public Works; Sanitation; and Utilities (water and wastewater). The city has 2,615 employees. The largest concentration of employees are in Police (29%), Fire/Rescue (13%), Utilities (12%), Sanitation (9%), Streets and Drainage (8%) and Leisure Services (7%).

The city's General Fund budget for FY 2016 is $188,894,830 and its total budget is $328,559,622. The city's budget year runs from January 1 until December 31. The property tax rate is 12.48 per thousand dollars (down from $12.90 in 2005). Note that in Georgia, property is only assessed at 40% of market value. The city's total assessed value in 2016 was $5,121,455,000 in an estimated value of $9,570,239,000, up .05% from the prior year. By comparison, the total assessed value rose steadily from $3.539 billion in 2005 to $5.010 billion in 2009 before dropping back and bottoming out in 2013 at $4.751 billion.

THE REVENUE DIVISION

The Revenue Division falls under the purview of the Chief Financial Officer who reports to the Chief Operating Officer who in turn reports to the City Manager. The Division is responsible for collecting the vast majority of the dollars the City of Savannah receives annually. In particular it manages and collects revenues from almost 64,000 property tax accounts, 6,600 business tax accounts, 80,000 water, sewer and trash accounts (some of which are outside the city limits), and 530 alcohol licenses accounts. All told, the Division processes approximately 500,000

transactions annually, the largest portion relating to the water and sewer accounts which are billed bi-monthly.

The Division has 50 employees. These are divided into three basic groups: Utility Billing (30 employees), Property Tax and Cashiering (14 employees) and Business and Tax and Alcohol (4 employees). The Division's other two employees are the Director and the Revenue Systems Coordinator reporting to the Director. Approximately two thirds of the budget is allocated to personal services, 15% to inter-fund services and 10% to outside services.

CHALLENGES

The Division has one primary challenge and several lesser challenges, most of which are related to the first. From 2016 to early 2017, the City implemented a new revenue collection system and it did not go as smoothly as the City would have liked. The result was a number of inaccurate utility bills that ultimately led to the loss of the public trust. Now, when a resident questions the amount of a bill, they frequently take to social media with their complaint. By the time the Revenue Division becomes aware of the concern, investigates the complaint and responds, the traditional media has picked up the story. In many ways, it is a vicious cycle. It is also unnecessary. Meter readings are virtually never wrong and meters never over-register. When the matter is investigated and a cause is identified, it is always a problem in the customer's unit—a "running toilet, a household fixture left running and so on. But with instant media, it is very, very difficult to get ahead of the story.

To reverse the cycle, the Division needs to do a number of things. First, it needs to find ways to respond more quickly and effectively to the customer concerns. Second, it needs to move from bi-monthly to monthly billing. Once that is done, plumbing issues will come to the resident's attention more quickly and can be resolved before the bills become unduly high. The third is public education. The Division simply needs to get its story out. Residents need to realize their high bill results not from a broken meter or a misread but rather from an issue at their property. Finally, customer service needs to respond more effectively. Once the public trust is lost, it is simply not enough to tell a customer that problem is in their property. They need tools to help the customer find and solve the problem.

The next challenge is a review of processes. Some processes are still manual and need to be automated. Some are not as efficient or effective as they could be. Others are fine and working well. Those that are not need to be optimized.
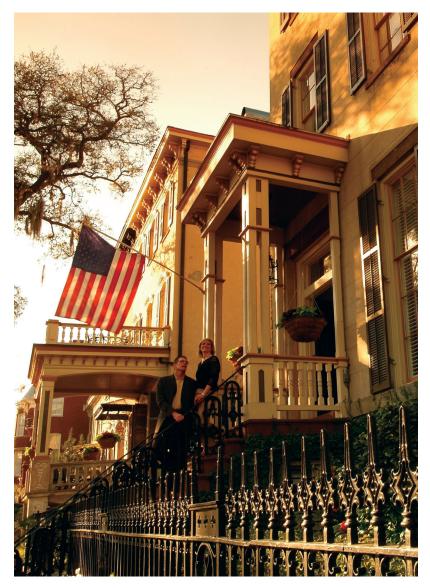
The final challenge is in the water meter infrastructure. Presently, some readings are done manually and some via Wi-Fi. The transition to fully automatic meter reading (AMR) needs to be completed so the Division can look at accounts in real time. With that tool, many of the customer issues could be resolved promptly and by phone.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate will be a leader and manager with outstanding analytical, communications and customer service skills. This job is not for the faint of heart or someone who wants to go home at 5 p.m. Restoring the public trust will take time and effort. The selected candidate should plan on working 60 or more hours a week because that is what it will take for the first year. On the other hand the job will be incredibly rewarding. It is an opportunity to restore the reputation of a valued governmental institution.

The ideal candidate will be someone who can lead and inspire. The Division staff is strong and technically capable. They simply need someone they can trust. The individual will be someone who can help them lay out a plan, obtain any additional resources that might be necessary, and guide them to success. As such, the best candidate will think strategically, be a mentor, and know how to motivate. He/she will be someone who is not always behind a desk but is among the staff and in the community listening. The individual will recognize the situation has many moving parts. Setting priorities

will be important but so will adjusting those priorities as circumstances dictate.

The Revenue Director will be a problem solver. Restoring the public trust will not be easy and will involve both fixing problems and the Division's image. The individual will be analytical, review processes and improve them. Being technically and social media savvy will be important. He/she will see trends and, where the trends are not positive, identify the underlying cause and fix it. If additional resources are needed, the next Director will not be afraid to ask for them and explain why they are needed. On the other hand, the individual will be comfortable speaking to the media and presenting the information to convey the Division's position generally and on individual concerns.

The ideal candidate will be an excellent communicator and able to cultivate trust. He/she will be sincere, approachable and outgoing. The individual will be able to speak effectively to people from all walks of life, whether they be high powered executives or someone who is just getting by. The next director will listen carefully and with empathy. His/her goal will be to resolve the customer's issue. That may mean helping identify a faulty plumbing fixture. It may involve education. It may mean working with the customer to establish a payment plan. The bottom line is the customer is not always right but deserves a good explanation and as much help as possible.

A Master's Degree in Business Administration, Public Administration, or Business Management; with five years of increasingly responsible experience in municipal finance and/or operations, a strong customer service focus, excellent written and oral communications skills, and experience with

systems, or any equivalent combination of education and experience is required. Experience in local government and familiarity with Georgia law (particularly in taxation, licensing, and regulatory issues) is preferred.

COMPENSATION

The salary is negotiable but the City anticipates paying between $100,000 to $110,000 for the right candidate. Benefits are excellent.

RESIDENCY

Residency within the city limits is not required.

HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your cover letter and resume to Recruit45@cb-asso.com by October 27th. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Rick Conner at (915) 227-7002 or Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537.

THE PROCESS

Applications will be screened between October 28th and December 4th when the finalists will be selected. A reception and interviews will be held on December 13th. A selection will be made shortly thereafter.

INTERNAL CANDIDATES

It is extremely doubtful that any internal candidates will apply.

http://www.savannahga.gov/

http://www.savannahchamber.com/

http://www.savannah.com/

http://www.seda.org

COLIN BAENZIGER & ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE RECRUITING