

Brian P. Kemp, Governor  
State of Georgia

Christopher Nunn, Executive Director  
OneGeorgia Authority



OneGeorgia Authority

2023

Annual Report



# About Our Mission

The OneGeorgia Authority promotes economic security for Georgians through the development and retention of employment opportunities in rural areas.

From land acquisition and infrastructure development to business relocation assistance and entrepreneur support, OneGeorgia provides financial support through grants and loans for these economic development activities to qualified applicants.

OneGeorgia serves as a financial partner and catalyst in helping rural communities maintain an excellent quality of life while also creating sustainable and diversified economies.

Funding is provided through Equity, EDGE, and the Rural Workforce Housing Initiative.

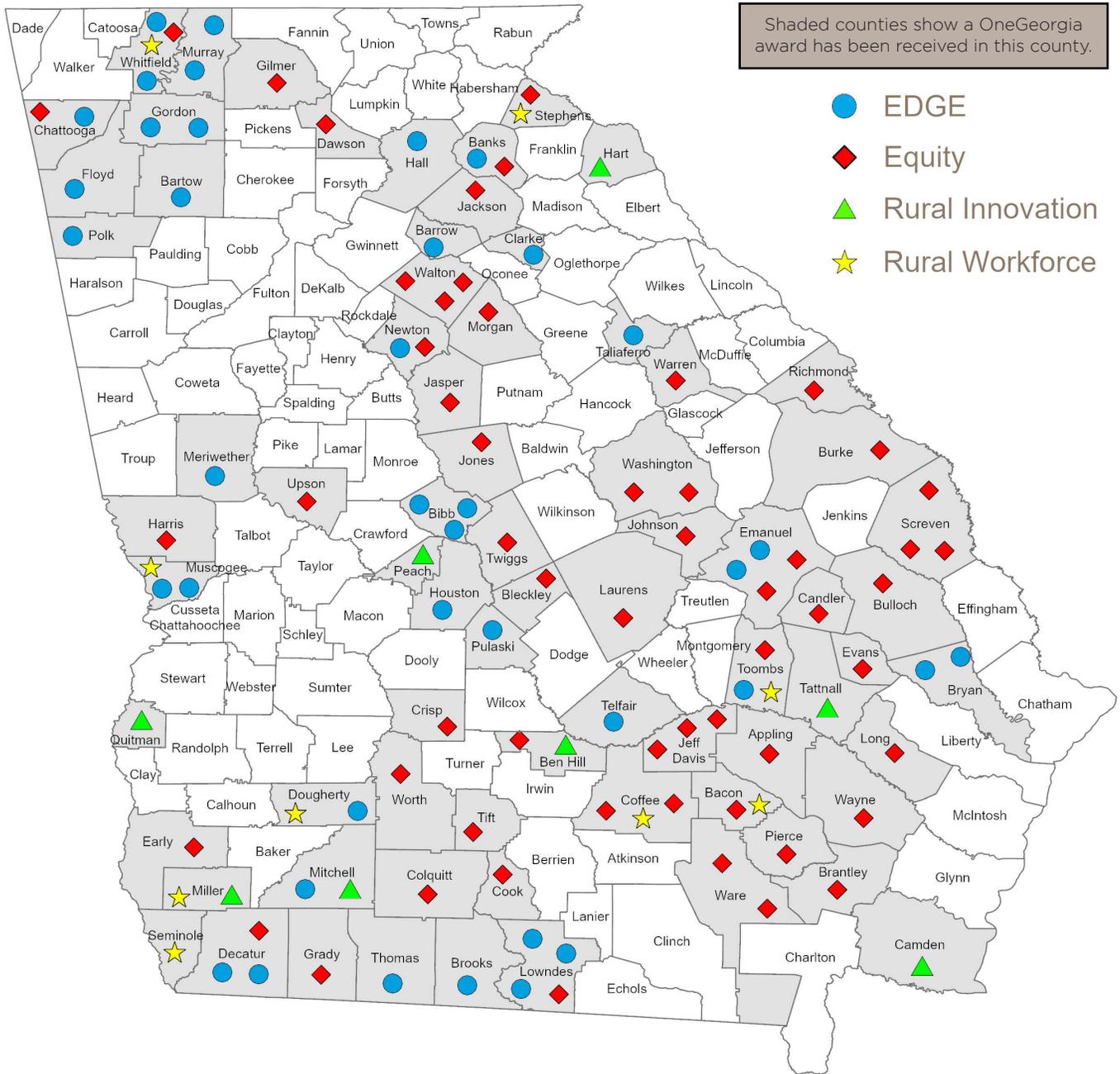
# Eligibility

Local governments, government authorities, and joint development authorities in rural counties that experience high poverty rates are eligible for OneGeorgia funding.

Conditionally eligible counties are required to have support from a neighboring eligible county for applications that have regional benefit.

# OneGeorgia Investments: 2019-2023

## EDGE, Equity, Rural Innovation, & Rural Workforce Housing Awards



# Our Programs

## OneGeorgia EDGE

EDGE provides financial assistance to eligible applicants as a relocation or expansion site and where Georgia is competing with another state for location of a project. These funds promote the health, welfare, safety, and economic security of the citizens of the state through the creation and/or retention of employment opportunities. A local development authority must be supported by a recommendation letter from the Georgia Department of Economic Development before applying for an EDGE grant.

## OneGeorgia Equity

The Equity program provides financial assistance to eligible applicants through grants for publicly owned infrastructure or loans for projects such as building construction and equipment. Funded projects are intended to develop capacity for local economic development and to enhance regional competitiveness. The Equity fund invests in projects such as water and sewer infrastructure; road and rail improvements; and industrial sites, technology, and equipment.

## Rural Workforce Housing Initiative

The Rural Workforce Housing Initiative provides flexible funding for eligible activities that result in or support workforce housing development in growing rural areas. Eligible activities include essential community infrastructure to support new housing development, construction finance for for-sale workforce housing, and land acquisition, subject to public ownership requirements.



# 2023 **Equity** Awards



# \$175.8 Million

Total Public-Private Investment in Land, Infrastructure, and Industrial Facilities



# \$3.2 Million

Equity Investment



**243** Jobs Created

**20** Jobs Retained



# 7

Community Investments



For several years, Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County struggled to attract new business.

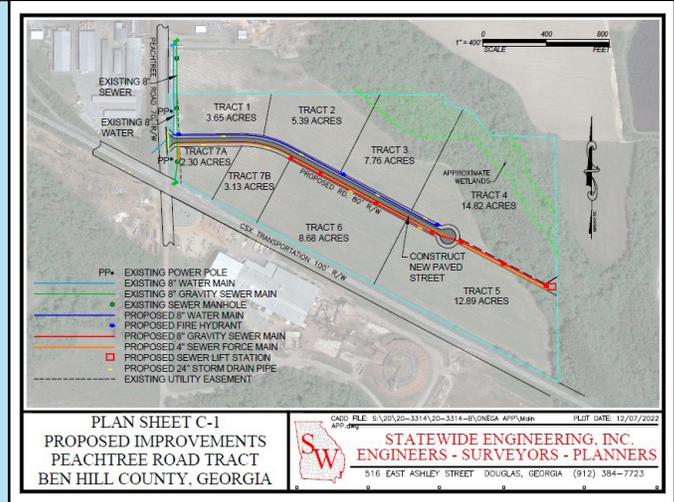
“We realized that we did not have a competitive site with the modern infrastructure to build those types of facilities,” said Jason Dunn, Development Authority Executive Director. “It put us to work quickly.”

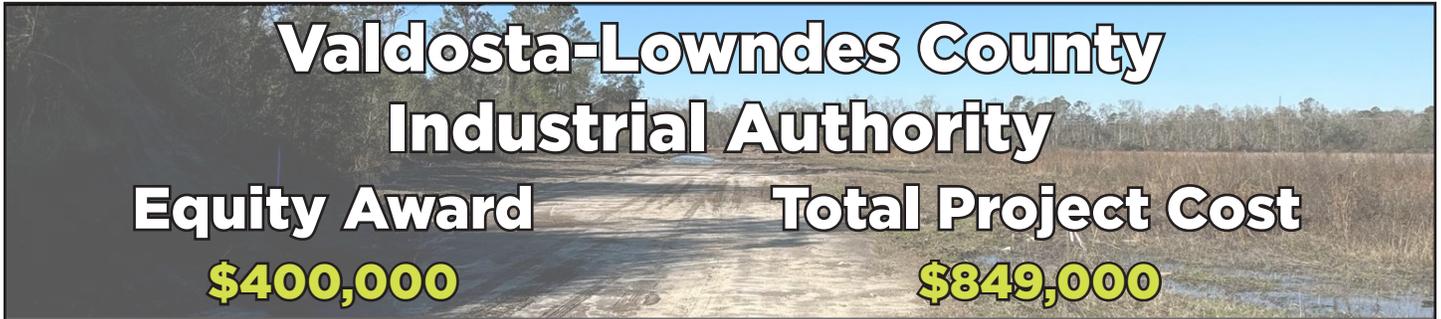
The Development Authority went straight to the drawing board, asking themselves how they could support the development of modern manufacturing facilities. When they looked at the last several years of city-county property sales, they found that 90 percent of these sales were for tracts of land smaller than 15 acres. Using this trend to their advantage, the Development Authority realized they could make their land a more valuable and attractive resource by turning it into a small business park.

“We’re trying to keep ahead of the game and keep our foot to the pedal,” Dunn said. “So we thought we needed to create more product to get through the next decade.”

That’s when the Fitzgerald-Ben Hill Development Authority turned to the OneGeorgia Authority to complete the Peachtree Industrial Business Park. The Development Authority already owned this 60-acre tract that can be divided into seven individual,

project-ready tracts. With a \$500,000 Equity grant award, Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County aims to attract new business prospects, specifically in light manufacturing. This grant awarded in October 2023, allows the Development Authority to complete street, drainage, sewer, and water system improvements for the park. Project engineers finalized the design in December, and the groundbreaking is expected to occur in the third quarter of 2024 after a six-month construction progress.





The Valdosta-Lowndes County area has faced exponential growth as the local industrial parks landed several prospects. While the momentum behind this boom is cause for celebration, the Valdosta-Lowndes County Industrial Authority wanted to find out how they could keep the momentum going. As Andrea Schruijer, the Authority’s Executive Director, put it, “Answering [our] questions involved sticking to what the organization [knows].”

“For us, [we have to look at our] ability to grow industrial property,” she said. “When the state and other entities have projects, we make sure we have the infrastructure and the sites and products available to submit for those projects.”

Sticking to what they knew meant the Industrial Authority had to look at its land to prepare for and to accommodate incoming growth. They had an opportunity when a locally-driven project from a corrugated pipe manufacturer that supports civil and commercial infrastructure projects across the United States approached the Industrial Authority about constructing a 73,000 square-foot manufacturing facility. However, the 80-acre tract of land off Inner Perimeter Road would require water, sewer, and drainage improvements, as well as a road extension, to make the area accessible.

Schruijer knew the improvements would be costly and began looking for other funding options. In her search, the OneGeorgia Authority became a helpful partner. The Industrial Authority was awarded a \$400,000 Equity grant in 2023 in response to their grant request. Combined with \$449,000 in local funds, this project’s construction is in its early stages. This state-of-the-art manufacturing facility is set to provide 40-50 full-time jobs in the community with an average wage of \$20 per hour.



# Candler County Industrial

Candler County is accelerating and going global. It has one of the lowest unemployment rates in Georgia at 2.6 percent. A lot of this success can be attributed to its industrial park which was purchased nearly 20 years ago. According to Hannah Mullins, the Candler County Industrial Authority's Executive Director, this industrial park is part of the county's long-term strategy to better the community's quality of life.

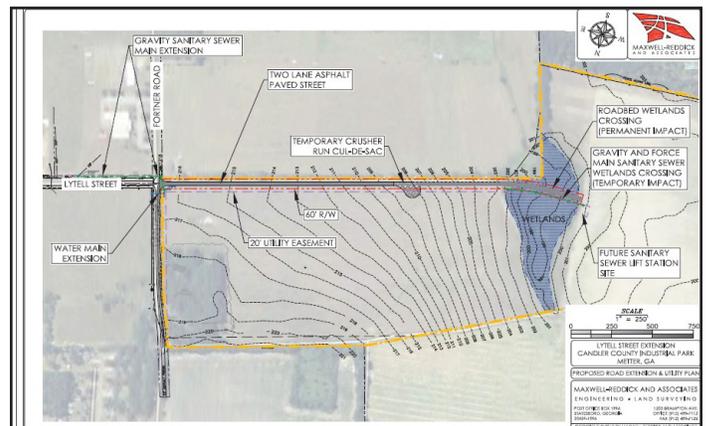
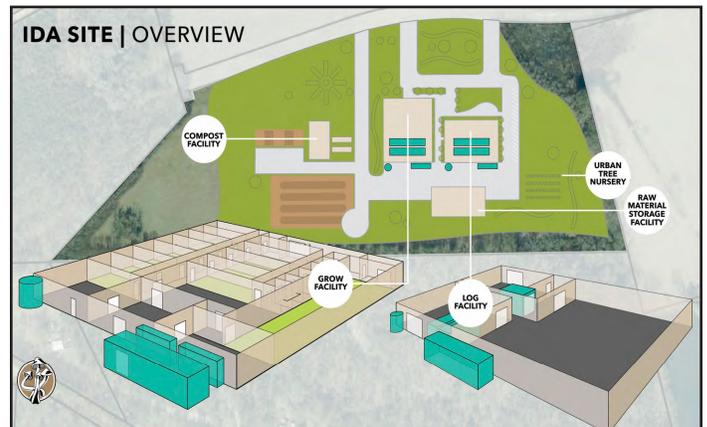
The first phase of the industrial park opened 12 years ago with 50 acres available for development. Since then, four industries – Pepsi Bottling, Button Transportation, CPE America, and HD Dryage – moved into these parcels. The second phase expanded the footprint to 76 acres on the 180-acre property.

Over time, the Industrial Authority knew the park's next phase would require opening up access to another 74 acres.

"There were a lot of people then that said [the Industrial Authority] was crazy for buying that land," she said. "But when I came in, [I said] it was a positive to have inventory. You can't recruit business without inventory."

After the Authority designed the remaining acreage into accessible and spacious parcels, it engaged the OneGeorgia Equity Fund. The Industrial Authority was awarded a \$500,000 Equity grant to extend Lytell Road, and connect more water and sanitary sewer within the industrial park.

It did not take long before 4Fungi's Regenerative moved into the park. The mushroom agribusiness is known for sending specialty mushrooms and specialty mushroom logs to restaurants and resorts around the world. In a special move, the company will cultivate a specially branded mushroom species to honor its new home, Metter. Mullins said their expansion into the industrial park will likely help Candler County's agricultural economy as 4Fungi's Regenerative purchases agricultural waste from local cotton, pecan, and





peanut farmers to use as compost. They also supply basil to Rao’s Specialty Foods in Alma, Georgia, further bolstering the region’s economy.

“Purchasing this waste is going to help a lot of local agribusinesses because, a lot of times, they don’t know what to do with it,” Mullins said. “Now they can sell it for revenue.”

Mullins said that success can lead to other successes.

“When another developer sees a company [this] large has landed into a community of [this] size, it really gives us a lot of clout to recruit more industries,” she said. “It’s going to be a gamechanger for us,” she said

The County is already seeing a return on their investment. Two automotive suppliers announced that they are locating in Candler County. Both DAS Corp. and Doowon Climate America, Inc., will supply the nearby Hyundai Metaplant and create hundreds of jobs. Candler County’s industrial park was key to their location selection.

4Fungi’s Regenerative will create 49 jobs and invest \$27 million into the community by 2026. HD Dryage will also expand into this area by 14 acres from its 10-acre parcel, creating 15 new jobs.

**Total Project Cost**  
**\$1,400,000**  
 .....  
**Equity Award**  
**\$500,000**  
 .....  
*“It’s going to be a gamechanger for us.”*

# EDGE Awards 2019-2023



## \$30.9 Million

EDGE Investment



## \$28.9 Billion

Total Private Investment



8,268 Jobs Created

6,463 Jobs Retained



## 39

Community Investments



### Jobs Created by Area

- The **Emanuel County Development Authority** was awarded an initial grant of \$375,000 for the location and expansion of **Wincore Window Company, LLC** in 2020. After another announced expansion and commitment of private investment, OneGeorgia made a second award of \$200,000.
- The **Murray County Industrial Development Authority** was awarded \$300,000 to assist with the location of a supplier distribution industrial facility for **Haier US**. This partnership with **GE Appliances** is adjacent to the Appalachian Regional Port with direct access to the Port of Savannah.
- The **Albany Dougherty Payroll Development Authority** received \$500,000 to assist with locating a new facility and expanding an existing one for **Outdoor Network**. The company committed to creating and retaining local jobs, as well as investing private capital into the project.



Meriwether County gained 180 new jobs when KB Autosys Manufacturing America, Inc., invested \$38 million into land outside Hogansville two years ago. To Jane Fryer, Executive Director of the Meriwether County Industrial Development Authority, it was exactly what they needed to inject some economic vitality into the area.

“There’s a lot of competition around,” she said. “We want to be able to keep some of our Meriwether County folks here instead of having to go out of town to work.”

For many years, Meriwether County’s economic progress was slow as it struggled to attract new industries. That changed with advanced manufacturing giant, KB Autosys, moving to the county. Fryer believes the move is already showing a return on investment. She has heard many stories about how county residents’ lives have improved. Folks have been able to buy houses and new cars because of the quality jobs the manufacturer has created in the area.



*“I would have never been able to apply for a car loan or a housing loan if I didn’t have this job.”*



Meriwether County would not have been able to recruit KB Autosys without the OneGeorgia Authority, which awarded the Industrial Development Authority a \$500,000 EDGE grant to assist with locating the manufacturing facility in Hogansville.

“Getting that help from the state is so valuable because we don’t have money to put into [attracting businesses] like some [governments] do,” Fryer said. “Every time we get one of these grants, I feel like it is a step forward in being successful bringing in more jobs.”

This development is allowing Meriwether County to be more competitive with neighboring communities like LaGrange, Columbus, and even towns across the Alabama state line.

# Exploring a New Program: Rural Workforce Housing Initiative

The Rural Workforce Housing Initiative is the newest OneGeorgia Authority program. This program provides flexible funding options to support eligible activity resulting in workforce housing. Such activities include essential community infrastructure specifically needed to support new housing development, land acquisition (subject to land ownership requirements), and construction finance for workforce housing. The Georgia General Assembly approved \$35.7 million to start the initiative in the Amended Fiscal Year 2023 budget signed into law March 2023.

In its first year, Governor Kemp announced nine grants totaling \$17.3 million for infrastructure development that will support single-family, for-sale and multi-family rental properties in every corner of the state. This initiative is addressing a critical need to ensure that economic growth is supported with safe and affordable housing for the workforce.

“These grants are the first step in meeting the needs of communities experiencing incredible growth as we continue to see new opportunities come to all corners of the state. I want to thank the members of the General Assembly who supported this initiative so that we can continue that upward trajectory,” Kemp said on September 8, 2023.

“In an effort to ensure Georgia’s growing workforce have quality and affordable housing options, the OneGeorgia Authority is pleased to support these local communities in attaining their housing goals,” said Christopher Nunn, Department of Community Affairs Commissioner.



## Projects Funded

- City of Albany: \$923,513
- City of Alma: \$2,498,218
- City of Colquitt: \$2,400,000
- City of Vidalia: \$2,500,000
- Columbus Consolidated Government: \$2,256,463
- Dalton-Whitfield County Joint Development Authority: \$1,500,000
- Development Authority of Seminole County and Donalsonville: \$2,500,000
- Douglas-Coffee County Industrial Authority: \$2,310,885
- Stephens County Development Authority: \$478,400

# 2023 Workforce Housing Awards



**\$17.3 Million**

Workforce Housing Investment



**\$91.5 Million**

Total Private Construction Costs



**858+**

Capacity of Housing Units to be Developed



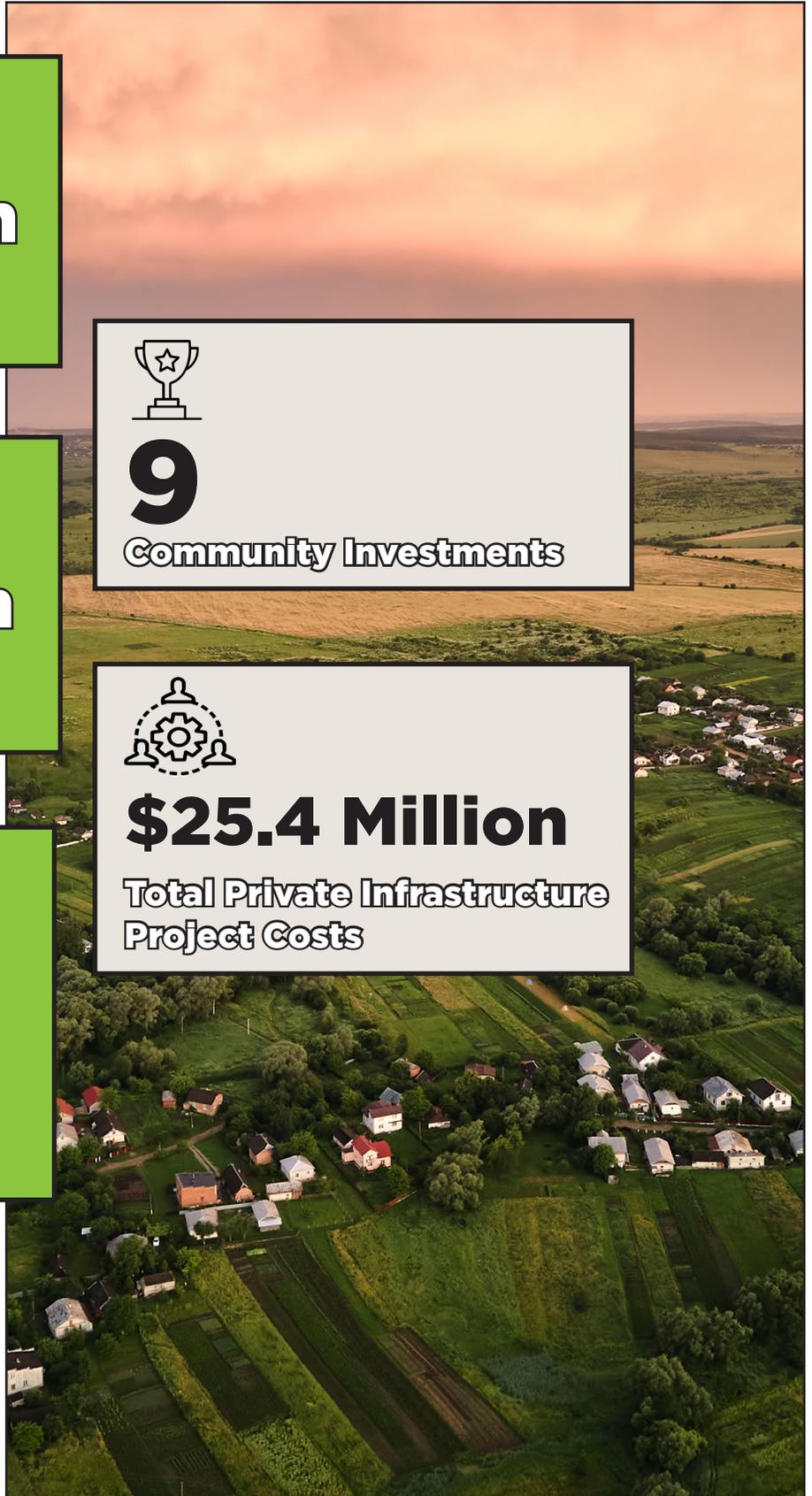
**9**

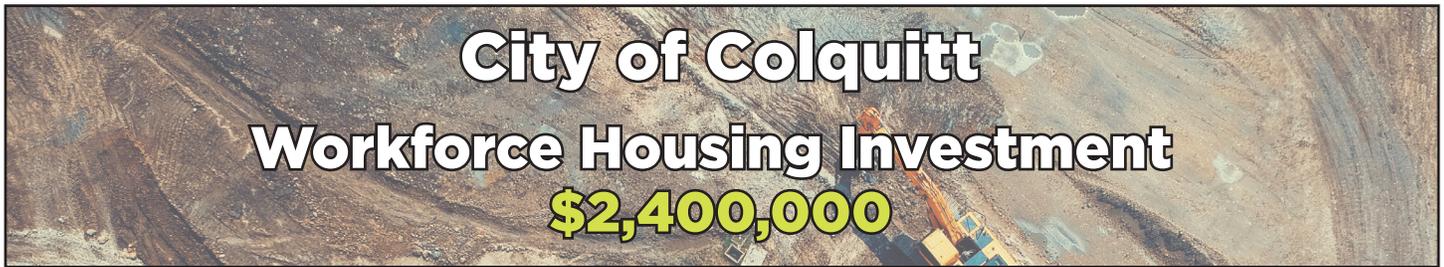
Community Investments



**\$25.4 Million**

Total Private Infrastructure Project Costs





When the City of Colquitt reconvened its Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) team in 2019, they posed this question: “What does our city need to improve its viability into the future?” The resounding response was workforce housing.

Today, 970 people commute to Miller County to work, leaving at the end of their work days to homes in nearby counties. Based on the 2020 Census, if this number of people were able to live in Colquitt, the area could see a near-50 percent increase to its population. City officials are confident that many of these commuters want to live closer to their jobs if they could. Jayme Smith, Economic Development Director at City of Colquitt Downtown Development Authority, knows the city currently has a disproportionately lower number of homes in the city-county area compared to the number of people who work within it.

Colquitt boasts a strong public school system, a lauded and vibrant historic downtown with several small businesses, and a prominent agricultural economy that needs plenty of land to continue to thrive. Colquitt may meet the definition of small-town Georgia, but the city and the surrounding county has experienced major growth in the last several years largely due to rural healthcare and the Miller County Hospital. This growth has been a boon for the local economy, but officials admit they were unprepared for it. The area’s growing, younger workforce is what led Colquitt’s GICH team to focus on the types of housing their young adult population want and can afford.

“There aren’t places for those young adults who graduate college and come back home . . . places available that are affordable for them to live at that price point [they need],” Smith said.

The GICH team advised the City of Colquitt to apply for the OneGeorgia Authority’s new Rural Workforce Housing Initiative. This community-led endeavor resulted in the OneGeorgia Authority awarding the City of Colquitt a \$2.4 million infrastructure grant for expanded water and sewer capacity on the 23-acre future home of the Legacy of Colquitt subdivision. The grant provides additional benefits as the new water and sewer capacity will extend to the Springside Apartment Complex, a multi-family development aided by Georgia’s Housing Tax Credit program. While this grant helps reduce the price of these homes, Smith noted the improvements also provide greater benefits to the city.

“So, [the water and sewer improvements] are benefiting the entire city because we’re now able to essentially close the loop and pressurize the system a bit more which may spur opportunities for commercial developments to be sprinkled in,” she said.

The City of Colquitt is capitalizing on the residential development and has plans to create more affordable housing developments. These housing options will help to attract incoming workforce for surrounding areas experiencing recent industrial growth, like Decatur County.

As of December 2023, preliminary engineering for the new water and sewer infrastructure is underway. The Legacy of Colquitt subdivision will result in 49 affordable, single-family homes and the Springside Apartment Complex will bring 44 housing units to the Colquitt-Miller County area.

# Columbus Consolidated Government Workforce Housing Investment

## \$2,256,463

Columbus, Georgia, is facing a housing crisis. As the city's population continues to grow, the number of available and affordable homes is not keeping pace. Too often, families are left with a tough choice about where to live: either pay more than they can really afford or live in conditions that do not meet their families' needs.

The area has an abundance of luxury apartments aimed at single individuals near Fort Moore, but Columbus has not seen the same level of development for affordable homes for low- to moderate-income households. This dynamic is creating pressure on the area's housing market. Sometimes, this pressure may result in a family becoming homeless.

NeighborWorks CEO Cathy Williams said, "It's a tough situation. There has consistently been nothing available at the price point people need, leading individuals and families to 'couch surf' or even end up in homeless shelters."

But necessity is the mother of invention, and the Columbus Consolidated Government, along with its development partner NeighborWorks, began developing Elliott's Walk. This multi-phase development completed Phase One in mid-2023 with the construction of 20 new, affordable homes. Each home was sold to families making 80 percent or below the area median income, seven of whom were active-duty soldier families and one military retiree. Members of the remaining households work in the local industry.

With the target demographic now residing in those homes, Phase One's proof of concept was considered a success. It showed that affordable workforce housing could be used to revitalize part of the South Columbus community that had not seen a new housing development in 60 years.



Normally, homes like these would cost \$80,000-\$85,000 more than the affordable price range for local families because conventional developers offset infrastructure costs in the home's sale price. Columbus offset these costs in Phase One by putting the infrastructure costs on a tax allocation district funding mechanism, allowing the buyers to pay for that infrastructure via taxes over 25 years.

This mechanism only worked for Phase One. For Phase Two of Elliott's Walk, the local government turned to the OneGeorgia Authority's new Rural Workforce Housing Initiative to bid for funding. Columbus and NeighborWorks put their creativity to the test and applied for the September 2023 round. Their efforts paid off and the Columbus Consolidated Government was awarded a \$2.3 million grant for water, sewer, drainage, and street improvements to complete Elliott's Walk Phase Two.

Columbus began the improvements in June 2023 and finished in December. Phase Two's 26 affordable homes will be built throughout 2024. Future phases of Elliott's Walk will include more homes and apartments on nearby acreage. Columbus has put its hopes into Elliott's Walk, believing it will be a catalyst for more workforce housing in the area.



In 2021, Stephens County seemed to be on the losing side of several economic prospects. Business expansions and other developments were turning down Stephens County in favor of other communities. For Brittany Ivey, President & CEO of the Stephens County Development Authority, her mission became finding out why Stephens County was coming up short with these prospects.

“We actually had an industrial developer with three plants in our community [tell us] we had missed two of their latest expansions,” she said. “One had gone to Mexico, and one had gone to Texas because they couldn’t fill the open positions they already had at their company.”

The developer told her that housing was the county’s biggest obstacle. Businesses would often find great people to hire, but these new employees could not find available or affordable housing options nearby. The number of available homes for the needed workforce was too low for most industries within the county.

“The [new hires] would come here and they would have to commute from somewhere else,” Ivey said. “But once they found a job with comparable pay, they would stop commuting here and take that job.”

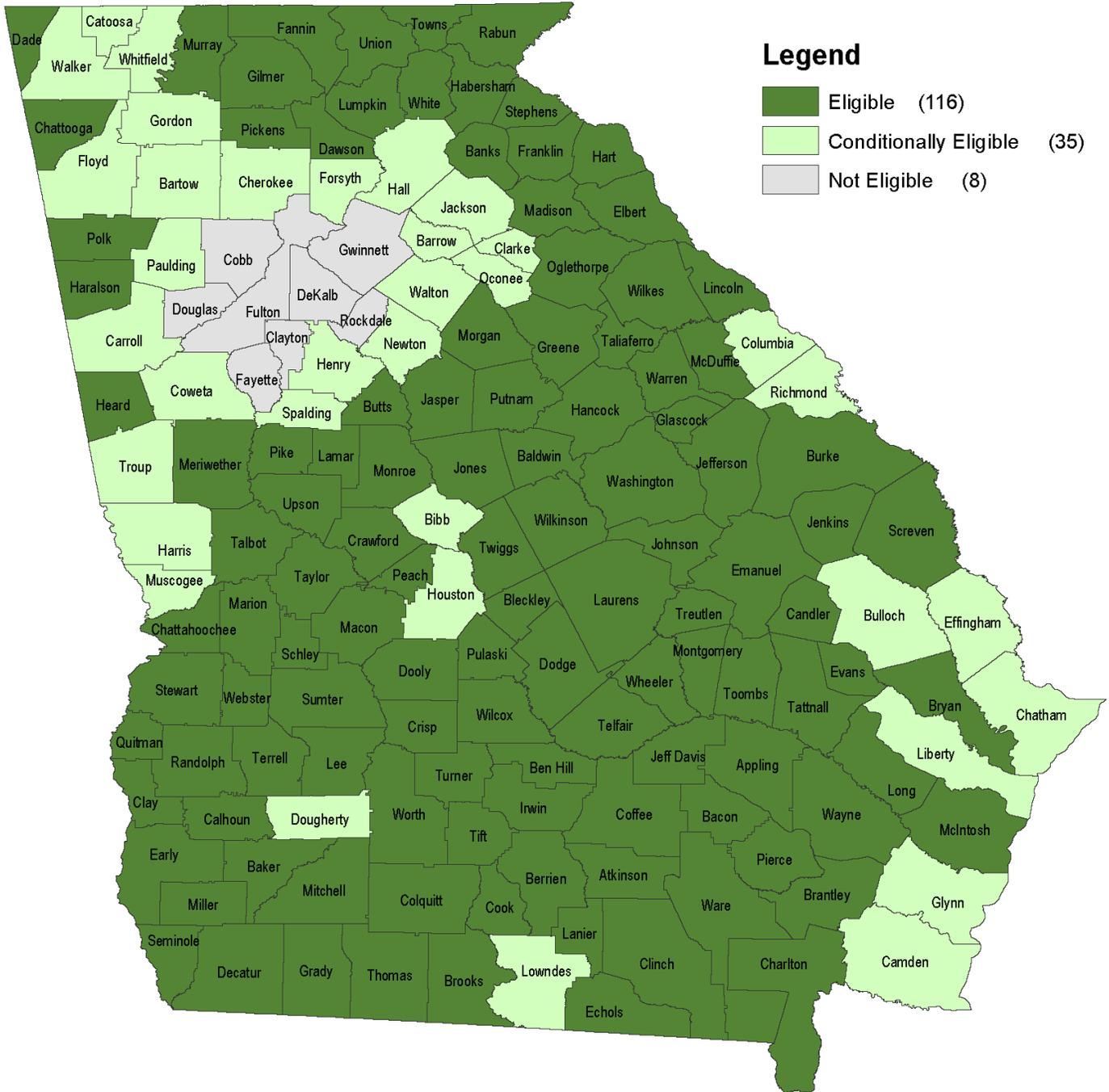
Sometimes the incoming workforce could not find a home at all. So, developing more local and affordable homes quickly became the Development Authority’s top strategic goals. In response to this strategic goal, Shah Developers crafted a master housing development that would bring the county a 90-home subdivision, 300-plus apartments, and a retail center. Ivey knew they had to jump at this opportunity. However, she also knew they would need to look at their infrastructure’s capacity to make it work.

“[In 2017,] we extended the sewer lines in our community through a grant we received from DCA, but we ran out of those funds before we could complete the lift station,” Ivey said, calling the lift station a husk with no power connected. “When we met with [Shah Developers] we knew we had to find a way to get that lift station completed.”

Ivey turned to the OneGeorgia Authority, hoping that the new Rural Workforce Housing Initiative could be a gamechanger for the county. The Stephens County Development Authority applied for an infrastructure grant and was awarded a \$478,400 infrastructure grant to build a sanitary sewer lift station. As of December 2023, the lift station is in the late stages of engineering and planning, with construction set to begin early 2024, around the same time Shah Developers will begin apartment construction.

# OneGeorgia Authority Georgia®

## Official Map Eligible Counties



### Legend

-  Eligible (116)
-  Conditionally Eligible (35)
-  Not Eligible (8)







# OneGeorgia Authority

## BOARD MEMBERS

### Governing Board

**Brian P. Kemp**  
Governor

**Burt Jones**  
Lieutenant Governor

**Jon Burns**  
Speaker,  
Georgia House of Representatives

**Richard Dunn**  
Director,  
Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

**Christopher Nunn**  
Commissioner,  
Department of Community Affairs

**Frank O'Connell**  
Commissioner,  
Department of Revenue

**Pat Wilson**  
Commissioner,  
Department of Economic Development

### Overview Committee

**Blake Tillery**  
State Senator, District 19

**Penny Houston**  
State Representative, District 170

**Larry Walker**  
State Senator, District 20

**Butch Parrish**  
State Representative, District 158

**Brent Churchwell**  
Senate Budget & Evaluation Office

**Christine Murdock**  
House Budget & Research Office

### Contact Information

**Gina Webb**  
Director  
OGA@dca.ga.gov



---

**ONEGEORGIA AUTHORITY**