



*Glynn County*  
GEORGIA

GLYNN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
**STRATEGIC PLAN, 2017-2020**

*A Golden Past. A Shining Future.*

Adopted on this 2nd day of March, 2017

by the

## **GLYNN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**Bill Brunson, Chairman, District 4**

**Michael Browning, Vice Chairman, District 1**

**Peter Murphy, MD, Commissioner, District 2**

**Richard Strickland, Commissioner, District 3**

**Allen Booker, Commissioner, District 5**

**Mark Stambaugh, Commissioner, At Large Post 1**

**Bob Coleman, Commissioner, At Large Post 2**

**Alan Ours, County Manager**

## **GLYNN COUNTY HISTORY AND PLAN CONTEXT**

One of Georgia's original eight counties, Glynn County occupies 423 square miles of land on the Atlantic coast south of the Altamaha River. The county was created on February 5, 1777 and named for John Glynn, a member of the British Parliament and a friend of the colonies who once held the position of Sergeant of London. Brunswick is the county's only municipality and serves as the county seat. The 2010 Census reported Glynn County's population at 79,626. The 2016 Census estimates the population now to be 83,579. Glynn County's rank as 30<sup>th</sup> in population size among Georgia's 159 counties masks a much higher demand for county services and management, in large part because of the community's unique and treasured geography along with its historic characteristics.

Easily accessed by the Atlantic Ocean, the Intracoastal Waterway, various rivers, and by Interstate 95 which dissects it, Glynn County's coastal location is a recreational haven for residents and visitors alike. The county features award-winning golf courses, some of the best fishing on the East Coast, and the majority of Georgia's oceanfront. The five islands of Glynn County - Jekyll Island, St. Simons Island, Sea Island, Little St. Simons Island, and Blythe Island - make up the Golden Isles, so named because of their vast marshes that turn a beautiful golden color in the fall. The islands' beaches, resorts, shops, and unique sites attract visitors and second home-owners from around the world. Home to many cultural and historic sites including state and national park properties, Glynn County's idyllic location and geography make land management and conservation important priorities for residents and public officials. The county's coastal and marsh exposures require well-planned evacuation and disaster response capabilities.

Tourism is a dominant industry, exemplified by the internationally acclaimed Sea Island, the State Park of Jekyll Island, and a multitude of other smaller, highly-rated lodging, dining and recreation facilities. Real estate and related financial and insurance services play an important role in the

economy. Once a community dominated by manufacturing, Glynn County now finds some 80% of its workforce in the services industries with another 18% in federal, state or local government employment. A high percentage of the county's population is over the age of 65, many of whom have relocated to the community to retire. Visitors and retirees bring attention, talent and great value to the community; they also heighten the demand for a wide range of services which may not be reflected in the traditional tax base.

The Port of Brunswick is recognized as one of the most productive ports on the East Coast and is the third-busiest Roll-On/Roll-Off port in the United States. The Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), a large agency of the United States Department of Homeland Security, sits on 1,600 acres in Glynn County and serves as an interagency law enforcement training organization for 90 federal law enforcement agencies.

The county is home to a host of thriving small businesses and larger manufacturing and industrial employers along with a multi-site comprehensive regional health system, growing state and technical college campuses, and an expanding public and private K-12 education system. Despite – and, in part, because of - its many attributes, Glynn County was particularly hard hit by the Great Recession. To attract, retain and advance talented young people and mid-career families, economic development and industrial sector diversification remain key priorities for the county.

Glynn County is recovering from the recession's impact but economic growth and opportunities remain uneven across employment sectors and neighborhoods. The demand for county government services and problem-solving capabilities is at an all-time high, yet resources remain at historically low levels. It is within this context of abundant opportunity and heightened community challenges that the Board of Commissioners sets forth its Strategic Plan to steer Glynn County Government through the remainder of this decade. The document serves as a guide not an anchor, and its implementation will be iterative, evolving and regularly evaluated. Given the rapidly changing intergovernmental, economic and community landscapes, the Commission believes that it will need to benchmark progress and adjust some strategies and targeted objectives early in the 2020s.

The Strategic Plan is adopted to set a course for action, drive the allocation of limited resources and establish measures for evaluating progress and making modifications. It informs policy, operational and budget decisions. We seek desirable but doable goals, and we endorse the actions necessary to achieve these goals. We must address the interests of new residents and visitors along with those of long-time citizens and heritage families. We honor the principles of conservation while promoting a strong, growing and diversified economy to afford access to the highest standards of living and quality of life across every age and economic strata. We believe county government has important and valuable roles in planning, service provision, public protection, regulation, and resource management. It is our commitment to ensure that Glynn County has the necessary resources to provide its citizens with exemplary services within the most efficient and equitable taxation structure. As the county's highest elected public officials, we recognize the important example we set for our constituents. We pledge to lead successfully with civility and collegiality.



In adopting this Strategic Plan, the Glynn County Board of Commissioners is guided by:

## **VISION**

***WE JOIN WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PARTNERS ACROSS THE COMMUNITY IN ADOPTING THIS SHARED VISION FOR GLYNN COUNTY:***

Working together to make Brunswick and the Golden Isles an exceptional place to live, work and visit by strengthening our communities and by enhancing the quality of life.

## **MISSION**

***TO ACHIEVE THIS COLLECTIVE VISION, COUNTY GOVERNMENT HAS AS ITS MISSION:***

To make Glynn County the premier place to live and work in the Southeastern United States, through the provision of quality services to the citizens and a safe, harmonious work environment for our employees.

## **CORE BELIEFS**

***WE EMPLOY A SET OF CORE BELIEFS WHICH GUIDE US IN FULFILLING OUR MISSION:***

We are an organization that cultivates a transparent environment of trust and respect.

With a sense of camaraderie, we are innovative, creative and focused on solutions to become a model of excellence among local governments.

We are united around our commitment to the County's vision and values at all levels of the organization.

We believe in serving the people of Glynn County to continually enhance the quality of life.

We are committed to sharing the leadership responsibility to making our County the best while creating a legacy of excellence.

## GOALS FOR COUNTY GOVERNMENT, 2017-2020

The Glynn County Board of Commissioners adopts six overarching strategic goals for county government:

**Safe Community**  
**Financially Responsible Government**  
**Exceptional Customer Service**  
**Planned and Managed Growth**  
**Great Place to Live**  
**Valued Employees**

Detailed below within each of the goals are objectives, some tactical, which must be addressed to reach the desired outcomes. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are included to help the Board and staff track progress and recalibrate as needed. The KPIs measure headway toward the broad goal, not necessarily any one objective. Given limited staff capacity, and a bias toward “doing” over data collecting, the KPIs are minimal in number. It is anticipated that the county will be able to expand and refine the set of indicators as the strategic planning, implementation and evaluation cycle becomes more ingrained and robust. For this cycle, 2017 data points are expected to serve as the baseline.

### 1. **Safe Community**

*It is our top priority and mandate to ensure that Glynn County’s citizens, businesses, homes, and environment are routinely safe from crime, fire, and natural and manmade disasters and, in the case of emergencies, that the county provides rapid response and recovery.*

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- a. Ensure Glynn County is recognized as one of the safest communities in Georgia.
- b. Recognize the growing concern around gang activity and drug issues and work with all sectors of the community to find ways to intervene early and deter criminal behavior. Within this objective, county-managed programs serving youth, such as Recreation and Parks and the Juvenile Court system, are central participants along with public safety officials, the schools and a host of community-based organizations.
- c. Promote maximum cooperation among all public safety, emergency response and law enforcement officials, across the county, city and other jurisdictions (e.g., health system, schools and colleges, FLETC, DNR, etc.) to reduce duplication, speed interventions and maximize efficiencies.
- d. Promote public safety and disaster prevention measures as well as rapid mediation and mitigation measures. A major focus within this objective is expanding community knowledge and participation through programs such as Police and Citizens Together (PACT).

- e. Using knowledge and experience from recent storms and incorporating model practices from other communities, improve and update the Emergency Response and Recovery Operations Plans.
- f. Fully fund fire and emergency medical services, wherever possible, through clearly delineated assessments collected equitably from all service users, businesses and residents, full- and part-time.
- g. Through competitive compensation and appropriate resource management, ensure public/fire safety and emergency response services have sufficient staffing levels and state-of-the-art capital and technological resources.

## **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- a. Percentage of citizens responding to the new Citizens Survey who report feeling safe in their neighborhoods.
- b. Incidents on a comparative rates:
  - i. Number of fires occurring per 10,000 residents.
  - ii. EMS incidents per 1,000 residents.
  - iii. Rate of violent crimes per 100,000 residents.
  - iv. Rate of non-violent crimes per 100,000 residents.
- c. Percentage of fire, EMS and public safety response times within established goals by service.
- d. Maintenance and improvement of FEMA Community Rating Score (currently 7).
- e. Ratio of revenue collected for fire safety and emergency medical services compared to actual costs.
- f. Annual employee turnover and retention rates among public safety, fire and emergency services personnel.

## **2. Financially Responsible Government**

*We promote efficient, effective expenditure of public funds while ensuring that the necessary resources are available to support economic and quality of life demands across the whole of a dynamic, diverse and growing coastal community.*

### **OBJECTIVES**

- a. Protect the existing Fund Balance (Rainy Day Fund) for emergency needs.
- b. Appoint a Revenue Study Committee, composed of business and community members, to review all components of the county's revenue approaches and collection processes. Key tasks of the committee would be to:
  - i. Ensure fees and revenue policies are comparable to similar coastal jurisdictions and adequate to cover the costs of services.
  - ii. Review service demands, costs and revenue contributions generated by visitors and part-time residents.
  - iii. Consider revenue diversification and fee-based services which benefit residents and visitors.
  - iv. Provide recommendations for the next decade of funding, anticipating potential changes in state and federal funding patterns.

- c. Develop the Internal Audit capacity necessary to routinely examine and evaluate county operations as well as the financial operations of constitutional offices when warranted.
- d. Develop a contracts compliance and oversight function to ensure maximum value for all outsourced services and resources.
- e. Ensure successful management of prior and future SPLOST funds with a focus toward project completion, on-time and within budget:
  - i. Direct aggressive close out of SPLOST IV and V.
  - ii. Appoint and engage the SPLOST 2016 Oversight Committee to ensure projects are completed in an efficient, transparent and fully accountable manner.
  - iii. Initiate and complete SPLOST 2016 projects, with priority and action focused on infrastructure, transportation, water/sewer, and other emergent projects.
- f. Work closely with other governmental authorities to minimize duplication of services, enhance integration of services and identify opportunities for shared success.
- g. Provide county administration with the mandate and capacity to plan, relentlessly, for service, staffing, infrastructure, and revenue needs over the long-term.
- h. Create a Capital Budgeting process for implementation in the FY2019 budget cycle.
- i. Seek public and private grant funds to support targeted, mission-specific programs and services.

### **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- a. Rainy Day Fund balance as a percentage of annual budget and revenues.
- b. Budgeting ratio, measuring the ratio of ongoing operating expenditures compared to ongoing operating revenues.
- c. Debt per capita and county bond rating.
- d. Ratio of tourism tax revenues to general county tax revenues.
- e. Annual amount of grant funds secured, year-over-year.
- f. Full-time employees per capita.
- g. Percentage of SPLOST and other capital projects completed on-time and within budget.
- h. Number and magnitude of audit and Internal Audit findings.

### **3. Exceptional Customer Service**

*As public servants and stewards of the public trust, it is our obligation to employ and retain exceptional staff who are proficient in their tasks and duties and who are appropriately compensated and commended for their competency and dedication. The expectation for exceptional customer service, combined with adequate training, support and commendation, extends to those dedicated citizens whom we appoint to the more than 100 voluntary positions on boards, commissions, authorities, and advisory councils.*

## **OBJECTIVES**

- a. Commission a Citizens Survey during 2017 to collect data on residents' use of and satisfaction with county services and operations.
- b. Ensure that all Commissioners and those citizens appointed to represent the county on commissions, boards and authorities have been afforded appropriate training on vision, mission, goals, and duties and responsibilities of their respective positions.
- c. Enhance citizen education and engagement, through a wide range of high-tech and high-touch approaches:
  - i. Improve access to data and information through expanded and streamlined web and social media presence.
  - ii. Improve navigation of the website and increase the amount of Commission-related information made available through it.
  - iii. Develop an annual citizens' education program which teaches interested members of the community about the responsibilities of county government, engages civilian talent in problem-solving roles and prepares individuals for volunteer board service.
  - iv. Produce and present, through the Commission Chair and the County Manager, an annual State of the County report which highlights key data about Glynn County along with progress on the Strategic Plan, the Comprehensive Plan, SPLOST projects, and other relevant issues.
- d. In preparation for the redistricting required following the 2020 Census, plan for optimal, electoral representation within commission districts.
- e. To enhance long-range planning and foster beneficial intergovernmental relations, elect Commission Chair and Vice Chair to serve two-year terms.
- f. Advance use of leading-edge technology to improve services to the public and response capabilities from county government.

## **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- a. Percentage of citizens responding to the Citizens Survey who feel that county employees are courteous, polite and helpful.
- b. Percentage of citizens responding to the Citizens Survey who indicate satisfaction with services provided by or under contract with Glynn County.
- c. Percentage of citizens responding to the Citizens Survey who indicate "don't know" for the opinion on quality of county services.
- d. Number and percentage of Commissioners and board appointees who complete position-specific training.
- e. Number of citizens attending community education, engagement and town hall events.
- f. Number of visitors to the county website and number of subscribers/followers on social media.
- g. Percentage of users indicating that information is easily found on the website.

#### 4. Planned and Managed Growth

*The unique beauty, environment and employment characteristics of Glynn County require that growth and economic development be both promoted and properly managed. The diversity of needs and the significant long-range opportunities mandate an immediate and aggressive effort to engage the whole of Glynn County in planning and developing a future state that is both sustainable and economically viable. Through planning, Glynn County seeks to preserve the unique characteristics of the coast; to protect existing families, businesses and industries; and to prepare for the economy of tomorrow in a manner which positively benefits all sectors of the community.*

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- a. During 2017, launch the development of the county's Comprehensive Plan for completion in 2018 as required to be recognized as a qualified local government by the State of Georgia:
  - i. Secure a recognized and respected planning firm, with expertise in successful local government planning, to facilitate the process.
  - ii. Appoint a diverse group of citizens, who represent stakeholder groups across the community, to advise and inform the planning process.
  - iii. Ensure the process promotes transparency, maximizes public input and encompasses the range of development and conservation concerns across the county.
  - iv. Incorporate principles which support both conservation and economic growth.
  - v. Employ the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Quality Community Objectives as a tool and build upon those objectives to create a robust planning framework.
  - vi. Use the planning process as a means to educate and create a unified, mutually respectful vision for residents across all of Glynn County.
  - vii. Once adopted, engage the entire community in the implementation of the plan and strive for recognition in the DCA PlanFirst program.
  - viii. Embrace and utilize the adopted 2018 Comprehensive Plan to guide and manage growth and development.
- b. Following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, review and revise as necessary all ordinances to ensure that they are tools to achieve the county vision.
- c. Create the conditions necessary to secure and retain full and professional staffing of the Community Development Department.
- d. Adopt and enforce a new Tree Ordinance for the county, which may incorporate different strategies by jurisdiction and neighborhood.
- e. Aggressively address abandoned and blighted properties and those not in compliance with code requirements. Within this objective, consider beneficial ways to use any reclaimed property as parks, community gardens, etc. to enhance community ownership and investment in improvement efforts.
- f. Recognize the unique characteristics and demands of both the Mainland and Island Planning Commissions to ensure that the members have appropriate training,

authority, support, and balance to successfully undertake their significant responsibilities.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- a. Completion of 2018 Comprehensive Plan and tracking of plan implementation.
- b. Percentage of filled positions in Community Development Department and retention rates.
- c. Appeals and outcomes of challenges to zoning and planning commission decisions.
- d. Ratio of public and conservation managed land to developed properties, comparative-basis (based on tax digest).
- e. Regular surveillance and measurement of the tree canopy and inventory.
- f. Percentage of code complaints that are determined to be violations.
- g. Average days to correct or close a code violation.

## 5. Great Place to Live

*We recognize the important constitutional and statutory roles which the county government has in promoting and managing services and programming. The availability, integration and quality of these local services often emerge as defining factors in making communities great places to live. Many private and public partners in arts, culture, education, conservation, recreation, and community development contribute to make these collective efforts successful. To ensure that Glynn County remains a great place to live, the county embraces and wishes to expand upon these partnerships.*

## OBJECTIVES

- a. Maximize access to and use of the county's Recreation and Parks services and facilities.
  - i. Promote an Adopt-A-Park program to engage citizens in park maintenance and beautification.
  - ii. Ensure full staffing of services and proper reimbursement for costs related to user-funded programs.
- b. Protect the natural and historic assets of the county:
  - i. Adopt and enforce a new Tree Ordinance.
  - ii. Develop and enforce rigorous anti-littering ordinances.
  - iii. Explore beach usage and management ordinances, such as a leash law, litter control, alcohol usage, and parking strategies.
  - iv. Effectively oversee waste management and recycling programs to expand usage and compliance.
- c. Support the Marshes of Glynn Libraries and an array of educational programs which integrate fully with the area schools, service organizations and non-profit agencies.
- d. Explore collaborative, cost-effective options to expand access to transportation for work, recreation and services, to include education and alternative modalities.
- e. Ensure the viability of and equitable access to emergency medical services and public and acute care health services.
- f. Promote outstanding animal control services and facilities.

- g. Improve traffic flow and reduce congestion through rigorous planning and implementation of transportation studies.
- h. Collaborate with the Joint Water and Sewer Commission and the City of Brunswick to ensure water quality and sewer capacity for homeowner, business and recreational needs.
- i. Work with the Development Authority, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce and other key business partners to provide leadership for new business recruitment and current business retention and expansion.

## **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- a. Citizen satisfaction with Glynn County as a place to live as measured through the new Citizens Survey.
- b. Number of residents and visitors, captured separately, using Recreation and Parks services and facilities, to include county beaches.
- c. Number of citizens using library and other county educational programs.
- d. Rating of the cleanliness of county facilities through the Citizens Survey.
- e. Number of Recreation and Parks volunteer hours.
- f. Number of youth participating in summer and recreational activities across all county programs.
- g. Live release rate of animals.
- h. Time to permit new businesses and developments.
- i. Response time to valid work orders submitted to public works.
- j. Miles of roadside litter collected and number of enforcement actions.

## **6. Valued Employees**

*As a large, complex and evolving public organization, we entrust fully and rely completely upon the nearly 1,000 full-time, part-time and seasonal employees who carry out the Board of Commissioner's policies and extend services to our constituents and our guests. We believe in trust, respect, innovation, and camaraderie between Commissioners, staff and the citizenry. It is our job to empower our County Manager and his team to hire, compensate and retain the best staff at every level.*

## **OBJECTIVES**

- a. Undertake an Employee Survey in 2017 to gauge status of the current workforce and identify opportunities for improvement of the employment experience.
- b. Ensure that employee compensation and benefits are on par with those in comparable jurisdictions and those in the competitive marketplace.
  - i. In accordance with a professional salary survey, plan for and implement any needed adjustments.
  - ii. Analyze the cost, benefit and employee impact of making changes to the retirement plan. Some considerations are to:
    - 1. Promote employee contributions to their own retirement plans.

2. Explore transition from defined benefit to defined contribution pension plan as means to attract new workforce and reduce the county's future liability.
3. Ensure that current employee pensions have a protection option if a transition moves forward.
4. Make any changes with a goal of cost neutrality to the employee and the county.
  - iii. Examine ways to promote employee health and well-being while controlling the rising costs of health insurance.
- c. To attract and retain a talented workforce, promote Glynn County as an employer of choice.
- d. Work with local and regional school systems and colleges and universities on employee development programs and to identify interns and prospective future employees.
- e. Support continued professional development and engagement/leadership in professional organizations.
- f. Ensure that the Commission and the public respect and value employees:
  - i. Recognize that Commissioners and appointed board members should be advocates for staff.
  - ii. Highlight staff credentials and accomplishments through the website and other public venues.
  - iii. Showcase employee achievements through Employee of the Month and Year programs.
- g. Promote safe working environments for all staff, with particular focus on public safety, fire/EMS and public works.
  - i. Ensure that all critical positions are filled.
  - ii. Ensure that staff are properly credentialed and fully trained.
  - iii. Utilize a Capital Budgeting process and long-range planning to secure leading-edge equipment for public safety, public works and hazard mitigation staff.
- h. Implement a Total Quality Management (TQM) approach which engages employees in problem-solving and leadership development.

## **KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

- a. Number of qualified applications received per job opening.
- b. Employee satisfaction rate as reflected in the Employee Survey.
- c. Percentage of employees who would recommend Glynn County as a good place to work, as determined through the Employee Survey.
- d. Absenteeism rate.
- e. Employee retention rate.
- f. Workers' compensation claims.
- g. Incident rates per miles driven for all public safety, public works, fire and EMS personnel.