

Housing Savannah Gardens project moves forward

Work is moving forward to transform the Strathmore Estates apartment complex on Savannah's eastside into an exciting mixed-use, mixed-income affordable housing community on Savannah's eastside.

Last fall, the City partnered with the nonprofit CHSA Development Inc. to purchase the 44-acre, 374-unit complex off Pennsylvania Avenue. City leaders saw it as an unprecedented opportunity to redevelop a key section of town while adding high-quality affordable housing.

Following a series of meetings with residents and neighbors, and a design charrette in which residents helped develop design principles for the project, a conceptual site plan was unveiled to neighbors last week.

The conceptual plan — which is still being developed — emphasizes pedestrian-friendly features, traffic-calming devices, ample greenspace, and a new urbanist, traditional neighborhood design. Vehicular access points will be added to and from Pennsylvania,



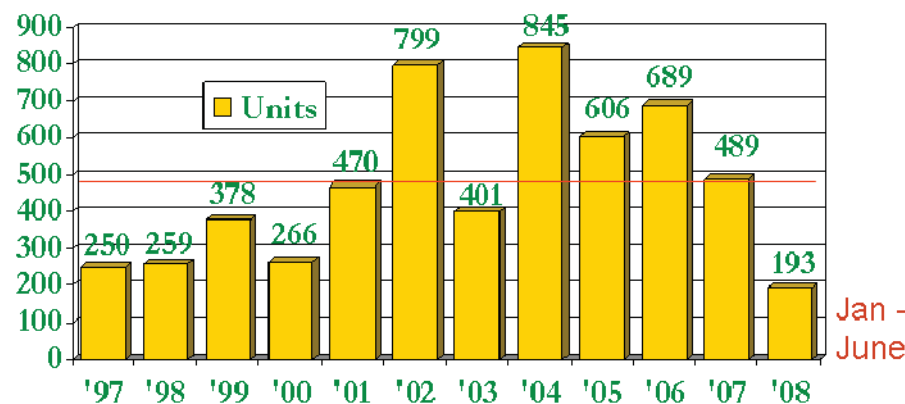
Elgin and Gwinnett streets.

Rental units and owner-occupied homes will be laced together, with single-family homes located around the perimeter, and small, walk-up retail located along Pennsylvania Avenue.

The community will be called Savannah Gardens — the traditional name for that area. When complete, it will house 400-600 affordable housing units.

In the past decade the City's affordable housing production has topped 5,500 units, including rentals, infill homes, homeowner improvements and first-time homebuyer purchases.

Affordable Housing Production 1997-2008



SAVANNAH City Council



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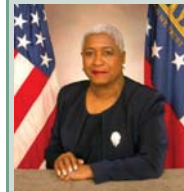
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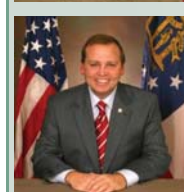
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thrive

environment • economy • community

Welcome, and thank you for attending the City's Town Hall Meeting on Sustainability.

Sustainability is about taking actions today to ensure the best possible future for all of Savannah. In addition to protecting our environment and natural resources, being sustainable means preserving our cultural and historical treasures. It means developing our City with energy efficient materials and in a manner that allows pedestrians, bicycles and transit to share the roads with automobiles. It's about building a place that promotes healthy living for all of our citizens.

It's about thousands of smaller individual acts that collectively allow Savannah to Thrive.

Thrive is a process your Government began late last year, when staff started collecting data from throughout the City to establish the size of Savannah's carbon footprint. We conducted employee commuter surveys and analyzed electricity consumption, fuel usage, and gas emissions. By plugging all of this data into a formula created by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, we came up with a number.

Your City Government as an organi-

zation produces roughly 75,320 tons of equivalent carbon emissions per year.

This is our baseline, and it is from this number that we will start this journey to Thrive. We're adopting a goal set by Gov. Sonny Perdue earlier this year: Reduction of our carbon footprint by 15 percent by 2020. And we've already started making changes.

In recent years, Savannah has been pro-active in converting all of our traffic

Take the Thrive Pledge
"I will strive to understand the social and environmental consequences of my actions and pledge to help Savannah Thrive by taking part in activities that promote an eco-friendly and sustainable community."

lights to more energy-efficient LED's. We have expanded our use of wastewater for irrigation, and have been a leader in adopting Georgia's first ordinance for re-use of graywater.

In January, we will implement a much-anticipated curbside recycling program to complement our successful drop-off sites and education center.

We are looking at the way we operate our vehicles — from the way we idle to the routes we take.

We are installing energy-efficient lights, and motion detectors to turn them off when no one's around. We are purchasing hybrid vehicles, and investigating the newest technology to convert waste into energy.

We are looking at everything from the computers and printers we buy to the materials we build with.

In coming months, you will see Thrive do much, much more. All 2,500 City employees have been tasked with coming up with ideas.

But we, as a City Government, need your help to make a real difference. We cannot do this alone. Thrive is for everyone, for all of our citizens.

With everyone pitching in, sharing ideas, and making commitments — only then will Savannah truly Thrive.

Ten Ways to be a Thriving Citizen

1. Recycle your household waste.
2. Turn off lights when leaving a room.
3. Run appliances with large energy use late in the evening.
4. Install ceiling fans.
5. Adjust your thermostat to a temperature comfortably low in the winter and high in the summer.
6. Replace older appliances with new energy efficient ones.
7. Consider your commuting options, such as carpooling, public transportation, walking and biking.
8. Use cold water to wash dishes and clothes.
9. Unplug equipment not in use.
10. Plant a tree.

Metro to re-align precincts

The Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police jurisdiction, stretching from the Effingham County line to the waters of Tybee Island, is big — 430 square miles in all.

If you could pick up the cities of Charleston, S.C.; Raleigh, N.C.; St. Petersburg, Fla.; and Rochester, N.Y.; they would fit together neatly inside its borders with room to spare.

Patrolling this huge area is a complicated job for the nearly 600 police officers of Metro. Six new precincts were created to cover this territory when the City and County police departments fully merged in 2005.

There were major improvements with this new structure: The islands got a precinct for the first time; before, county police operated only out of its westside headquarters off the Chatham Parkway.

Under Chief Michael Berkow's tenure, these new precincts were dramatically beefed up as part of the chief's strategy to shift resources out of centralized, specialized squads and into the precincts to be closer to the people and the problems.

But there were also some issues: Some neighborhoods were awkward fits with their new precincts. West Savannah, for example, was placed in the West Chatham Precinct when most of the rest of the Bay Street corridor remained in the Downtown Precinct.

Workload, too, was disproportionate among several of the precincts. Thus, while the Central Precinct responded to 21 percent of Metro's calls for service, Skidaway handled just 10 percent.

"Population has shifted since their creation, but we also didn't have the data at the time to make truly informed decisions about the

precinct lines," Berkow said. "It was time to take a fresh look at this structure."

For the past six months, Chief Berkow and a team of command officers have been closely examining precinct staffing, boundaries and locations. They are now nearing the end of that analysis, and in coming weeks will begin to roll out several changes.

Among them:

- Boundaries will be changed to reduce the number of precincts from six to five. These five new precincts will be very closely balanced in terms of workload, Part I crimes, and calls for service.

- The West Chatham Precinct station will be moved to a more appropriate physical location closer to the westside growth, likely along the U.S. 17 corridor.

- Each precinct will be divided into two geographic sectors, with a lieutenant and team of officers assuming responsibility for specific "turf." This will strengthen accountability for results in each sector, and allow more decisions to

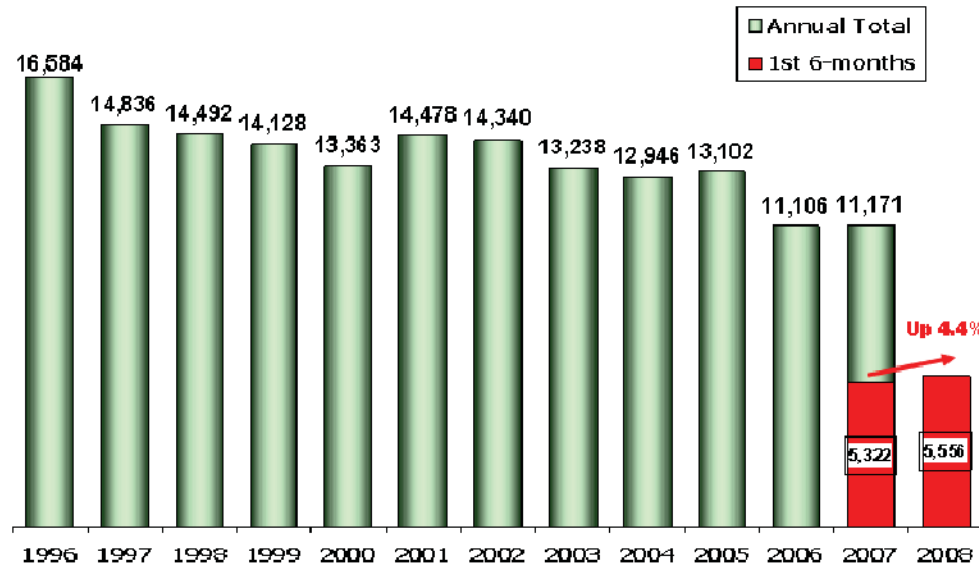
be made at the street level.

The new precinct boundaries are careful not to divide neighborhoods, and closely follow geographic boundaries like major roads and rivers, speeding up response times. The lines had yet to be finalized by early August, but will be shared with the community when they are.

The merger of two precincts is expected to free up more than half a million dollars in fixed costs, such as overhead, administrative support, and command staff. This freed-up money will be used to add a special officer to each precinct to focus on juvenile crime. Because of vacancies there will be no demotions during the change.

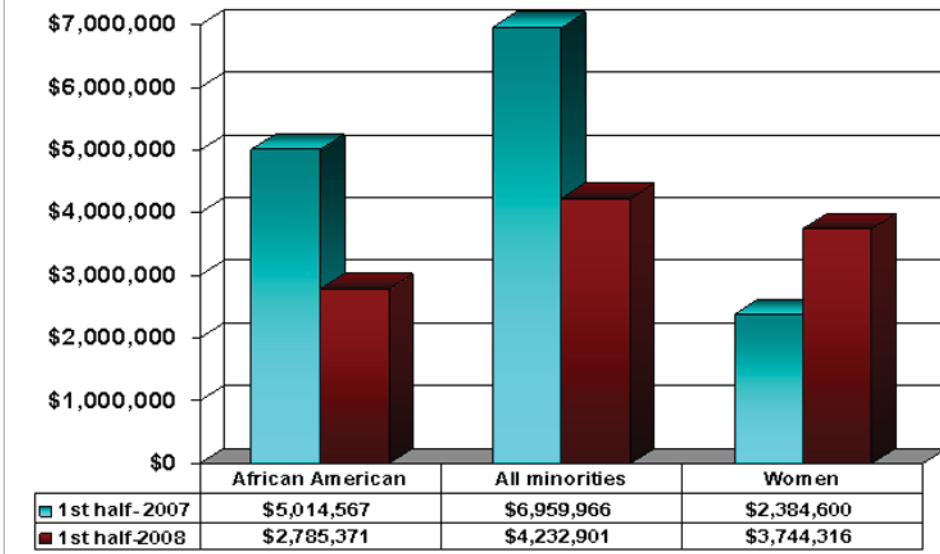
"This re-alignment results in a win-win situation," Berkow said. "It allows us to better serve our communities, it maintains respect for each neighborhood, it provides additional front-line police resources without additional cost to taxpayers, and it allows for the appropriate placement of actual precinct stations."

Long Term Crime Trends Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Department



City adopts local preference ordinance

% of total City contracts awarded to minority- or women-owned businesses: 1st half 2007: 25%
1st half 2008: 27%



In the second quarter of 2008, the City of Savannah amended its procurement ordinance to give a stronger preference to local vendors.

By favoring local contractors -- and particularly minority local contractors with businesses located in high-poverty areas -- the City hopes to boost the local economy and help develop the capacity of local businesses.

The change, adopted in April, affects bids for supplies, services, small purchases, and construction projects under \$100,000.

Under the previous policy, such contracts were automatically awarded

to the low bidder, even if that company was located thousands of miles from Savannah. This was true even if a local company also bid on the project, and missed getting the contract by mere pennies.

The amended ordinance allows a local company that submits a losing bid for a City contract to match the winning bid of an out-of-towner if the local company meets one of three criteria:

- The local business enterprise was within **2 percent** of the low bid.
- The local business is owned by a minority or woman and was within **3 percent** of the low bid.

- The local business is owned by a minority or woman, is located in a high-poverty target area, and was within **4 percent** of the low bid.

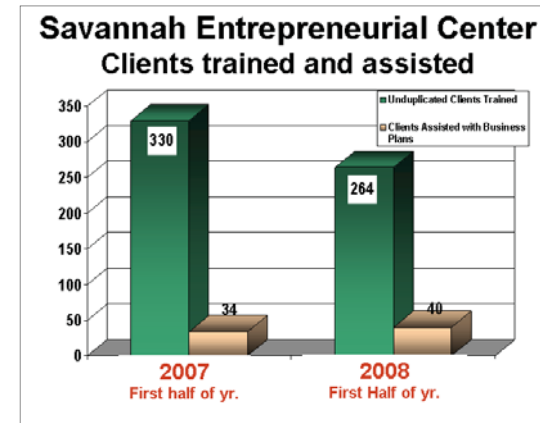
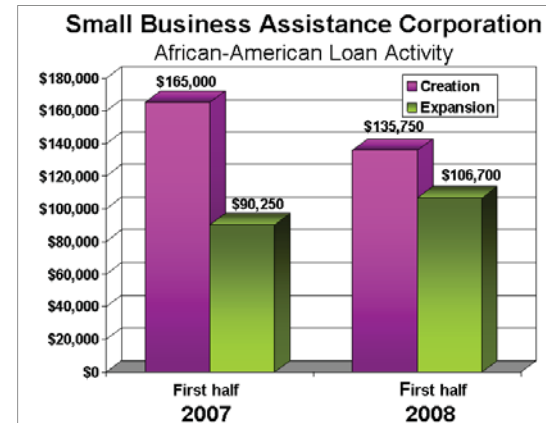
Since its adoption this spring, the local preference change has led to more than \$600,000 in contracts re-directed to local firms.

The City is helping residents create such local businesses through places like the Savannah Entrepreneurial Center, which through the first half of the year had trained 264 clients, helping 40 create business plans. Once those business plans are created, the City partners with organizations like the Small Business Assistance Corporation and the newly opened Accion, which provide low-interest business loans to sometimes high-risk entrepreneurs.

Last year, the City began issuing "sheltered contracts" -- a series of small contracts awarded to small, developing companies.

When a company finishes one contract, he is then offered another. In this way, a start-up construction company can increase its capacity through a series of small jobs, and be rewarded with more work when those jobs are completed to the City's satisfaction.

Since last year, the City has been issuing these "sheltered contracts" to about half a dozen minority-owned companies to make more than 1,400 corners handicapped accessible downtown.



The City's Entrepreneurial Center offers would-be business owners training on topics such as accounting and business development, and helps participants create business plans. The Small Business Assistance Corporation offers creative financing for small business start-ups and expansion ventures.