

**Part A: Cover Sheet**

1. Proposing Entity Name and Contact Information:

Chatham County Government, Georgia

Point of Contact: Chester A. Ellis, Chairman ~ Chatham County Board of Commissioners

chairman@chathamcounty.org

124 Bull Street, Suite 210

Savannah, GA 31401

912-652-7950

Unique Entity Identifier: Z29GZXYP9M68

2. Project Name: Chatham County Public Safety Building
3. Grant Tracking Number: WS01121100
4. Type of Project: Enhance Military Value
5. Status of Non-Federal Cost Contributions: Proposal includes the required at least a thirty percent (30%) non-Federal and/or another (non-Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation)
6. Not Applicable

## **Part B: Installation Need:**

Chatham County, Georgia has seen tremendous population growth since 1990 and we don't see this activity slowing down anytime soon. The Census's 2022 numbers estimate Chatham's population at 301,107 with a steady increase of another 73,000 residents over the next 42 years. That's a 24% increase in population in our coastal Georgia community.

Chatham County's coastal location, hosting major railroad networks, centrally positioned on two major US corridors, home of an international airport, and the home of the 4<sup>th</sup> largest port in the United States, inherently lends itself to housing numerous military installations and DOD branches. In fact, Chatham County has numerous Department of Defense facilities within the County's boundaries. (See Attachment A – Chatham County with DOD Facilities.)

- Hunter Army Airfield (HAAF) has a workforce of approximately 4833 active-duty military, 117 tenants, 996 dependents, plus retirees. Additionally, HAAF has schools and housing available to those stationed at the installation.
- The US Coast Guard has three military installations in Chatham County. The three stations include Marine Station Tybee, Air Station Hunter, and the Marine Safety Unit. The workforce of these Coast Guard Stations is estimated to include 1,500 military personnel.
- Chatham County is home to the Georgia Air National Guard 165<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, which has an estimated workforce of 1,200.
- The US Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) – Savannah Division is located in Chatham County and has an estimated workforce of 250.
- Additionally, the US Army Reserve is also located within Chatham County.

HAAF is a significant participant in the synchronization and execution of Chatham County's community-wide emergency management principles. A "Whole Community" approach for the safety, security, and welfare of both the citizens of Chatham County, service members, and families of HAAF is critical. Leveraging resources and collaboration provides added value in connecting Chatham County's military families to community resources, people, and needed information. This "Whole Community" approach serves as an additional resource to successfully navigate not only the challenges of military life but adverse events and unanticipated emergencies that may both threaten the community and the military installation.

The proposed Chatham County Public Safety Building (CCPSB) is being proposed to directly address:

- Deficiencies in the Chatham County community's infrastructure,
- Support multiple DOD installations and efforts,
- Enhance military value,
- Improve and ensure Installation resilience,
- All while improving our military family's quality of life.

The CCPSB will serve as the epicenter of emergency response and recovery for all of Chatham County, to include HAAF, and in some instances the coastal southeast Georgia region, to support continuity of operations among agencies. Currently, emergency services and communications are fragmented across the County and housed in multiple facilities that do not meet the pressing needs of the County's ever-growing community. Having this one location will provide a central, hardened public safety structure where the DoD workforce can be stationed, and critical resources can be housed for use 24/7 as needed during emergency situations and incidents.

While the CCPSB will be the primary facility for Chatham County's emergency operations, it will also serve HAAF as a robust alternate or contingency operational area to ensure the critical work of the Installation does not cease, even in critical circumstances. Not only will the new facility be built to

withstand Category 5 hurricane force winds, but the facility will also be built on the highest ground within Chatham County and be significantly less susceptible to storm surge and flooding. Consistent access to and support from several local and regional partners also located within the facility and access to dozens of vital community partners during an emergency will help ensure minimal interruptions to the Army's mission. The CCPSB's design includes dedicated workspace for HAAF team members, training rooms for events or meetings, and the potential for a cybersecurity lab within the next five years. Use of this space, along with the necessary equipment and set up for seamless integration, directly supports the ongoing and immediate efforts of the Installation and its role as a DOD Power Projection Platform.

More recently it has become evident that Chatham County requires more efficient and direct emergency communications programs. The coordination of E-911 calls from the Installation is cumbersome and indirect, with delays in emergency care as a potential result. Through the work of Chatham County's new Computer-Aided Dispatch/Records Management System (CAD/RMS), Chatham County has already begun implementing new procedures that will directly aid HAAF's military personnel and their families residing off the installation. HAAF 911 calls are received by Fort Stewart HAAF Emergency Communications Center as a Primary Public Safety Answering Point. Where wireless callers are concerned there are shared towers resulting in some calls being answered by Chatham County 911. HAAF EOC is located within the footprint of HAAF, and coordinates requirements and resources with FS EOC which has oversight for the consolidated USAG FS/HAAF emergency operations.

Administrative staff are currently housed in temporary trailers thereby removing them entirely from the rest of the dispatch team. In addition, the primary facility is located in a designated flood zone highly susceptible to storm surge and localized flooding events. Most notably, this main facility currently used during large-scale emergency incidents within Chatham County will not weather most tornadoes, strong storms, or hurricanes as the building is not rated to withstand windspeeds of more than 120 miles per hour.

In fact, in the case of high wind events, Chatham County must relocate the Emergency Operations Center and the E-911 Center to an inland county. Chatham County currently has an agreement with a local university located in Bulloch County to temporarily house emergency operations equipment and staff when major disasters occur. Having HAAF personnel co-locate with Chatham's emergency staff and officials would be invaluable, however, traveling such a far distance during a widespread emergency compromises Chatham County and its partners' ability to respond to emergencies in a safe and timely manner. This cascading issue ultimately puts all personnel and residents in danger.

The integration of an Army installation within a joint community public safety building is essential for maximizing efficiency, enhancing security, and maintaining the overall value of the Army installation. The absence of such a facility would lead to a degradation of Army value, negatively impacting the supported installation, military installation resilience, and military family quality of life.

The proposed community public safety building serves as a central hub for emergency response and law enforcement agencies, enabling effective coordination and rapid response in times of crisis or security threats. By locating the Army installation within this facility, it ensures seamless collaboration between the military and local authorities, leading to enhanced security measures, improved emergency response capabilities, and a reduced response time. This bolstered security significantly safeguards personnel, assets, and critical infrastructure at the Installation.

#### **Assessment of Expected Beneficiaries:**

The proposed community public safety building is expected to benefit various stakeholders in addition to HAAF. The beneficiaries will include:

1. **Military Service Members:** Military personnel stationed at HAAF will directly benefit from the project. They will have access to enhanced emergency response capabilities, improved security measures, and streamlined coordination between military and civilian agencies. This contributes to their safety, well-being, and mission readiness.
2. **Military Families:** The project will significantly benefit the families of military service members residing within the boundaries of the Installation as well as those outside the boundaries yet within the local community. The presence of a central public safety building ensures a safer and more secure environment for military families, offering peace of mind and improving their quality of life. It positively impacts their well-being, especially during emergencies or natural disasters, and fosters a sense of stability and support within the community.
3. **Local Civilian Population:** The broader civilian population residing near HAAF will also be beneficiaries of the project. The establishment of the public safety building enhances overall public safety, emergency response capabilities, and disaster preparedness in the community. It provides timely and effective response services during emergencies as well as synchronization of hazard response message, benefiting all residents, businesses, and institutions in the area.

#### **Assessment of Population Benefited:**

The extent to which the total population of military service members and their families will benefit from the project may vary based on factors such as proximity to the public safety building and the specific services provided. However, it can be assessed that a significant portion, ranging from 70% to 100% of the Installation's population, including military service members and their families, will benefit directly from the project.

Moreover, the community public safety building plays a crucial role in bolstering military installation resilience. By co-locating with local emergency management offices, the Army installation can engage in comprehensive disaster preparedness and response planning. This enables both civilian and military agencies to work together in a coordinated manner, ensuring efficient handling of natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and other emergencies. By fostering collaboration within the public safety building, the Army installation enhances its resilience and ability to rapidly recover from disruptive events, thus maintaining mission readiness.

To further detail the benefits of partnering with local municipal governments and other entities in a countywide public safety building, the advantages include:

1. **Enhanced Coordination and Collaboration:** By partnering with local municipal governments, the Army installation can establish a collaborative relationship that allows for effective coordination and joint efforts in public safety initiatives. This collaboration enables the sharing of resources, information, and expertise, leading to improved overall emergency response capabilities.
2. **Comprehensive Emergency Management:** Coastal areas are prone to various natural disasters such as hurricanes, flooding, and coastal storms. Partnering with local entities in a countywide public safety building ensures a comprehensive approach to emergency management. It allows for the consolidation of emergency response agencies, including the military and civilian organizations, facilitating coordinated planning, preparedness, and response efforts during not only natural disasters and localized events, but large-scale incidents and other emergencies.
3. **Efficient Utilization of Resources:** Collaborating with local municipal governments optimizes the utilization of resources available in the surrounding community. It enables the sharing of infrastructure, equipment, and personnel, minimizing duplication of efforts and maximizing the efficiency of response operations. By leveraging local resources, HAAF can augment their own capabilities and better respond to emergency situations.

4. **Timely and Effective Response:** Coastal Army installations face unique challenges during emergencies, such as the need for rapid evacuation or sheltering of personnel and assets. Partnering with local entities in a countywide public safety building ensures a more rapid and effective response. Coordinated efforts enable the timely dissemination of information, establishment of evacuation plans, and provision of necessary support services, all of which are crucial for protecting personnel, both on and off the Installation, and maintaining military readiness.

The proposed Public Safety Building in essence will become a component of the community's infrastructure and underlying foundation for security and response. The absence of a countywide public safety building could significantly degrade military values at HAAF to include:

1. **Fragmented Emergency Response:** Without a central hub for coordination and collaboration, emergency response efforts would be fragmented and less effective. Lack of streamlined communication and information sharing could lead to delays in response, hampered situational awareness, and decreased overall effectiveness in addressing emergencies.
2. **Reduced Resilience:** Coastal areas are vulnerable to frequent and severe weather events. The absence of this shared community infrastructure project hampers the ability to develop comprehensive resilience strategies. This includes measures such as flood mitigation, hurricane preparedness, and infrastructure protection. These efforts are vital for maintaining HAAF's operational capabilities and ensuring the safety and security of personnel and critical assets.
3. **Missed Opportunities for Resource Sharing:** Without a partnership with local entities, HAAF may not have the opportunity to leverage local resources. During emergencies is not the time to develop and execute response plans. This project enables prior coordination and preparation among agencies for all hazards. This could lead to a strain on the Installation's own resources, potentially resulting in delays, increased costs, and decreased effectiveness in response and recovery efforts. In short, HAAF's operational mission and resources to support the Army's Power Projection Platform could be drastically impacted.
4. **Impaired Community Integration:** Partnering with local governments and other central entities fosters community integration and builds trust between military installations and the surrounding civilian population. The absence of such collaborations could lead to a lack of support, strained relationships, and decreased cooperation during emergency situations. This can have adverse effects on HAAF's families, their quality of life and overall community resilience.
5. **Military family quality of life:** The absence of the joint community public safety building would also adversely affect military family quality of life at the Army installation. The facility's presence provides military families residing in the local community with an increased sense of security and stability. Access to effective emergency response services and law enforcement resources in proximity ensures a safe environment for military families to live, work, and raise their children. This positively impacts their overall well-being, morale, and satisfaction with their Army lifestyle.

#### **Proposed Project's Support for Minimizing Interruptions to the Installation Mission:**

The proposed project aligns with broader efforts aimed at minimizing potential interruptions to the DOD mission. These efforts include:

1. **Energy and Environmental Resilience:** The community public safety building incorporates various measures to enhance sustainability, energy resilience, flood prevention, and hurricane proofing. By integrating renewable energy sources and implementing smart technologies, the facility promotes energy efficiency and reduces dependence on external energy sources and potential interruptions. This ensures a reliable energy supply for the building and contributes to

the DOD's overall energy resilience strategy. Furthermore, flood prevention and hurricane-proofing measures protect the Installation and its assets from natural disasters, safeguarding the mission-critical operations of the Army installation.

2. **Disaster Preparedness:** The public safety building, as part of comprehensive emergency management efforts, strengthens the installation's preparedness for natural disasters, such as floods and hurricanes. By implementing flood prevention measures, hurricane proofing strategies, and infrastructure protection, the project enhances the Installation's resilience and ability to sustain critical operations during and after these events. This directly supports the mission by minimizing disruptions caused by such emergencies.
3. **Collaboration and Coordination:** The partnership between HAAF and the local entities within the public safety building fosters collaboration and coordination in emergency response planning and execution. This joint approach ensures efficient utilization of resources, timely information sharing, and streamlined communication during emergencies, ultimately minimizing potential interruptions to the DOD's Army mission.

The integration of an Army installation within a joint community public safety building is vital for maximizing efficiency, enhancing security, and maintaining Army value. The proposed project supports broader efforts to minimize potential interruptions to the Army installation's mission by promoting effective emergency response, fostering collaboration between military and local authorities, and incorporating energy resilience, flood prevention, and hurricane-proofing measures. By ensuring the safety and well-being military service members, military families, and the local civilian population, this initiative creates a resilient environment that sustains the local military Installation's mission.

In conclusion, this proposed community infrastructure project is essential for effective coordination, comprehensive emergency management, optimal resource utilization, and timely response to emergencies. Without such a project, Hunter Army Airfield's military values will be significantly degraded, impacting emergency response capabilities, Installation resilience, and community integration.

**Chatham County is requesting \$20,000,000 to assist in completing the initial construction of the Chatham County Public Safety Building.** We anticipate the CCPSB will significantly enhance the coordination of emergency response and life safety efforts; allow for a more streamlined communication process and promote a quicker and more efficient decision-making structure across the various levels of government and military. In short, with the new CCPSB, joint programs and community partnerships can only improve, in addition to providing life-saving communications for 100% percent of the military members and their families on HAAF.

#### **Part C: Endorsement Letter (Attachment B)**

#### **Part D: Project Description:**

Coastally situated, Chatham County faces a variety of natural threats and hazards which include tropical storms, hurricanes, flooding, and storm surge. Chatham County also must be ready to respond to tornadoes, wind damage, lightning, fires, as well as the potential for man-made disasters such as bomb threats, explosions, active shooter, hazardous materials, and cybersecurity attacks. These threats will potentially create economic, psychological, and emotional hardships should damage or injury to our residents' families, pets, homes, jobs, and schools occur. Chatham County is home to over 300,000 residents, including our 7,472 active military supported population plus the estimated 6000 temporary residents attending post-secondary schools or professional development training. As previously noted, Chatham County is honored to have a strong relationship with local military installations and branches to include Hunter Army Airfield, Fort Stewart, Air Force 165<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing, Air National Guard, US Army Reserve, and the US Coast Guard. Each of these units are involved in emergency management planning efforts as well as operational

emergency execution should that become necessary. Our partnership to ensure all residents are supported and safe is of critical importance.

Since October of 2016, Chatham County and the Coastal Georgia Region have experienced an array of natural disasters and from each one, our capacity of staffing matrix and ability to respond effectively has been improved yet the community need for a larger, enhanced facility is critical to the safety of all. Chatham stakeholders have successfully managed the evacuation of more than 15,000 individuals' multiple times and maintained the essential services through collaborative efforts with local, regional, state and federal agencies.

The proposed Chatham County Public Safety Building (CCPSB) will serve as the epicenter of emergency response and recovery for all of Chatham County. Currently, emergency services and communications are fragmented across the County and housed in multiple facilities that do not meet the pressing needs of the County's ever-growing community. Chatham County's current Dispatch Center and Emergency Operations Center are housed in facilities that are too small for the intended operations and too vulnerable to significant weather events. When conditions exceed the limitations of these current facilities, most emergency response officials within the County are forced to evacuate inland to a local university's facility, further fragmenting these essential services. The evacuation of our key personnel and services from our County could easily prolong the recovery of our community and further degrade the ability of HAAF to re-entry the County and serve its primary military mission.

Once completed, the CCPSB will eliminate the need for evacuations of emergency response officials from the County during large scale incidents. Instead, first response agencies, including HAAF, will be able to successfully stage personnel and equipment to easily assess damages and respond as soon as weather conditions permit movement throughout the County. In short, having this one location will provide a central, hardened public safety structure where DOD workforce can be stationed, and critical resources can be housed for use 24/7 as needed during emergency situations and incidents.

#### CCPSB Specifications:

Coastal Georgia is highly susceptible to a variety of natural and man-made hazards that could have catastrophic economic impacts for Chatham County and the rest of Georgia should Georgia Port Authority disruptions occur, or commodity transportation issues arise. These hazards could cause significant challenges to the daily operations of HAAF and DOD entities housed within Chatham County. Having an off-installation facility with existing infrastructure and the necessary agreements to seamlessly transfer military operations from an affected site to a secure public safety building would be invaluable to HAAF.

The proposed CCPSB will be constructed to withstand hazards associated with Category 5 hurricane, winds of 190+ MPH, high wind velocities for an EF-4 tornado's impacts, and other threats and hazards. The building will be equipped with redundant HVAC, sanitation, potable water, and power systems to allow for a minimum of 72 hours of continuous operation in the event of a primary system failure. HAAF has a dedicated room within the CCPSB Emergency Operations Center (EOC) that will allow key personnel to receive essential information and respond, when necessary. During emergency situations, the EOC will support 126 workstations, provide break-out rooms for response coordination, allow for GIS mapping capabilities for situational awareness, serve as a workspace and briefing area for media partners, provide an alternative location for continuity of operations of HAAF and essential military functions, and allow for centralized continuity of government operations location for Chatham and its 8 jurisdictions.

The CCPSB will house Chatham County's emergency management staff, radio communications program, Savannah Airport Police, and Chatham County's E-911 Dispatch Center. The colocation of these resources supports military-civil partnerships and joint training opportunities. The Chatham County Police

Department has also partnered with E-911 to provide additional staffing to the communication and dispatch center to augment their workforce and provide better services for those using the E-911 call center.

The proposed state of the art facility will allow the 911 dispatch program to expand and ensure that the needs of Chatham County residents are met when they need it most. Chatham County has invested upwards of \$12 million towards a Computer-Aided Dispatch/Records Management System (CAD-RMS) upgrade that will enhance the E-911 system for all municipal users. This significant endeavor will provide safer and more efficient E-911 services to our first responders, residents, and visitors to Chatham County.

Supporting the above services under one roof allows for ease in coordination and maximizes collaboration and communication with local, state, and federal partners. Building this facility is important in ensuring that Chatham continues to provide essential, potentially life-saving services during threats. Having a facility that can withstand the major threats to our coastal area will allow for quicker responses during an event and will aid in the earliest possible implementation of recovery after a threat has passed. The ability of HAAF to perform its primary mission as a power projection platform is directly related to the community's ability to respond in emergency situations and therefore support of the CCPSB is critical.

As the critical benefits of the Public Safety Building are detailed, it becomes clear that the proposed complex will not only address very specific deficiencies (community's infrastructure deficiencies for multiple DOD installations, enhancing military value, improving and ensuring Installation resilience, and improving the military family's quality of life ) but this community project characterizes the Army's 7 core values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage.

#### CCPSB Emergency Support Functions and Agreements:

During a disastrous event, Chatham County plays a crucial role in ensuring, maintaining, or restoring services and logistics to the installation. Chatham County works cooperatively with HAAF and all military organizations to ensure an effective and efficient response and recovery effort. These efforts are coordinated through the County's Emergency Operations Center and directly benefit our local military installations, its workforce, and its families. The Emergency Support Functions, as coordinated by the Chatham County Emergency Operations Center, benefits the military, and aligns with the following priorities:

- **Transportation:** The Emergency Operations Center coordinates re-entry routes, bridge inspections and mitigates life safety issues so the military staff and families can return to the installation.
- **Communications:** The Emergency Operations Center coordinates communication efforts with locals, state, and federal government. Likewise, we ensure commercial communication providers (voice and data) have access to restore services which has a direct benefit to vendors and families.
- **Debris Management:** The Emergency Operations Center coordinates the initial debris removal to allow road networks to re-open.
- **Fire Fighting Service:** Through Mutual Aid Agreement large firefighting efforts are coordinated through the Emergency Operations Center across Chatham County.
- **Emergency Management:** Chatham County Emergency Management Agency, by way of the Emergency Operations Center, partners with Ft. Stewart and HAAF emergency management staff and routinely plan, train, and exercise together.
- **Mass Care and Sheltering:** The Emergency Operations Center coordinates mass care and sheltering operations, which could have a significant benefit to the families of military service men and women. Additionally, HAAF and Chatham County have a cooperative Mutual Aid



Agreement in which a facility on the installation serves as a critical workforce shelter for Chatham County Departments.

- **Resources and Logistics:** The Emergency Operations Center coordinates the resupply of commodities, fuel, and other essential needs for the community.
- **Health and Medical Services:** The Emergency Operations Center coordinates the restoration of medical services for all Southeast Georgia. This includes hospitals, pharmaceuticals, dental, mental health, dialysis, and all other medical needs.
- **Energy:** The Emergency Operations Center coordinates with utility service providers to ensure electricity, water, and gas are restored and ready to support the community; residents who reside on and off-post.
- **Law Enforcement:** Through Mutual Aid Agreement law enforcement efforts, requiring multiple jurisdictions to respond are coordinated through the Emergency Operations Center across Chatham County.

Furthermore, HAAF has active agreements with various Chatham County departments and units of government for animal services, mosquito control, search, and rescue, as well as drainage projects.

Chatham County Animal Services has an executed Intergovernmental Service Agreement HAAF to assist with animal calls on post. The US Army has a small animal facility located on Fort Stewart and unfortunately military police on post have little training/experience with animals and animal related incidents. Through this agreement, Chatham County Animal Service Officers assist authorities on post with animal related calls, when needed, to assist with an injured animal or animal that needs to be impounded.

Chatham County Mosquito Control has worked with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers since 1959 regarding maintenance and mosquito control in the Savannah Harbor Dredge Material Containment Areas (DMCAs). Most years mosquito control has been provided at no or reduced cost reimbursed through agreements or grants. Mosquito Control also communicates with Hunter Army Airfield command staff, as deemed necessary, regarding mosquito borne disease activity that occurs in proximity to the facility. Mosquito Control Aviation Division has been requested to provide support for the U.S. Coast Guard as well as the Air National Guard over the years. Typically, these requests have been related to search and rescue efforts. Mosquito Control Aviation crews responded quickly to the 2018 Savannah C-130 incident to provide aerial support using the FLIR camera to spot fires and direct first responders.

Chatham County engineering has a long history of collaboration with the local military community specific to capital projects, most notably focused on drainage, sea level rise, and mitigation of stormwater run-off. For example, in 1972, the Secretary of the Army granted a local easement agreement with Chatham County for construction, operation, and maintenance of a drainage ditch that has since been extended to allow for continued maintenance of the drainage ditch.

The Chatham County 911 Center currently faces a significant challenge in managing their high call volume of over 500,000 9-1-1 calls each year. This has led to the inability to establish a partnership with surrounding 911 Centers to serve as a backup during busy periods. To address this issue, Chatham 911 Communications Services and Fort Stewart 911 have collaborated on a mutually beneficial partnership. Fort Stewart's Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system is reaching the end of its operational life and requires replacement. Similarly, Chatham County is in the process of upgrading its CAD System and Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD), Fire, and Police Protocol. In this proposed collaboration, Chatham County would provide Fort Stewart with access to their CAD/EMD system and training, while Fort Stewart would serve as a backup agency to handle overflow calls 24/7 during peak periods.

Implementing the extension to Fort Stewart, including the necessary infrastructure and software, represents a strategic investment for Chatham County. With a budget of just over \$631,000, the county can establish a robust backup system, ensuring uninterrupted emergency services during peak periods. In contrast, the alternative option of hiring additional personnel over a 10-year period would incur costs exceeding \$2.5 million, making the collaboration with Fort Stewart a cost-effective solution that optimizes resource allocation and maximizes public safety outcomes.

This partnership represents an innovative solution to the ongoing challenges faced by the Chatham County 911 Center. By leveraging the resources and expertise of both agencies, the proposed collaboration ensures more efficient call handling, improved emergency response, and enhanced public safety for the community.

Finally, the County has an executed Memorandum of Understanding with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Georgia Ports Authority, and GA Department of Transportation effective April 2021 for the Hutchinson Island Boat Ramp. USACE will construct a two-lane boat ramp on the north side of Hutchinson Island as part of the Savannah Harbor Expansion Project to provide recreational boaters access to the Back River. The County agreed to accept ownership and maintenance of the ramp in exchange for the remaining 12-acre site. The County plans to construct Marine Patrol headquarters on the site, providing public safety in support of the Coast Guard.

The Chatham County Public Safety Building (CCPSB) will collocate and house first-responders, emergency personnel, and Hunter Army Airfield personnel to provide essential and emergency services across the southeast Georgia community, including 21,695 Department of Defense active military, 2432 army civilians, 7188 family members, plus more than 23,000 retirees. **Chatham County is requesting \$20,000,000 to assist in completing the construction of the Chatham County Public Safety Building.**

#### **Part E: Project Engineering Information:**

This construction ready project includes a new 85,000 square foot facility to be located at 654 Gulfstream Road, Savannah, Georgia 31408 allowing easy access for vehicles of various sizes while ensuring the critical infrastructure is above existing flood zones. The complex will comprise a two-story tilt up concrete structure to include emergency command offices, kitchen, storage, utility plant, communication tower, and dormitories. The building has been designed with survivability standards and seismic hardening including utility redundancies included. Requirements for a Category IV, “Essential Facility” facility capable of withstanding 190 mph 3-sec wind gusts when impacted by a hurricane will be met. Also, this building is designed to withstand a missile level E - 9LB. 2x4 fired at 80 ft. per second and be self-sustaining for a period of 72 hours. Flood elevation design of the existing parcel will be mitigated to ensure survivability against a Category 5 Storm Surge and localized flooding. A site map and a rendering of the proposed building are included as an attachment. (Attachment C)

#### **Part F: Project Parties:**

While Chatham has a long tradition of maintaining its historic character, physical resources, and natural reserves, the multitude of planning efforts have led to an increased need and attention being focused on our health and human resources. Realizing this challenge, the Chatham County Board of Commissioners is making an effort to align budget requests with true community needs. This effort is being done through the implementation of the community’s long-term community-wide strategic plan known as the *Chatham Community Blueprint (Blueprint)*. This local long-range strategic plan identifies four areas of priority: Economy, Education, Health, and Quality of Life. The overarching vision of the Blueprint is to promote opportunities for economic mobility, safety, lifelong learning, and exceptional health for all residents.

Most recently, Chatham has expanded efforts to make decisions that ensure resiliency and sustainability of Chatham County's greatest assets – its land and its people. The Community Blueprint's guiding values and strategies has guided the local government's efforts and investments since 2015. As such, all policies and expenditures need to demonstrate alignment with the Blueprint to be funded and executed. While the Blueprint is more community facing; Chatham County's internal team has developed standards of excellence and core values that should be met. These core values ensure staff can comply and exhibit honesty through integrity, safety with justice, stewardship promoting transparency, pride increasing respect and teamwork producing achievement. Chatham County's fundamental core values closely align with those of the Department of Defense and make this project a win-win for both the County and the DOD.

Additional committed stakeholders for this project include an array of local, state, and federal organizations including Chatham County's Emergency Management Agency, Chatham County's E-911 Communications Department, the Savannah Airport Commission's Public Safety Department, and other regional public safety stakeholders. As part of an EOC structure, numerous additional stakeholders populate EOC workstations to mitigate an emergency or disaster event when it occurs. Historically this includes: 28 Chatham County departments and units of government, seven municipalities within Chatham, Georgia Department of Defense, Georgia Department of Public Health, Georgia Ports Authority, Georgia Power, HAAF, Georgia Department of Transportation, Savannah Chatham County Public School System, Savannah Economic Authority, Savannah Heritage Emergency Response, Metropolitan Planning Commission, Memorial/HCA and St. Joseph Hospital Systems, University of Georgia Extension Service, US Army Corps of Engineers, and the US Coast Guard. Also included is the Salvation Army, Red Cross, and other critical non-governmental agencies working during emergencies.

Having multiple stakeholders ultimately included and benefitting from this Public Safety project will ultimately promote comprehensive perspective, collaboration, coordination, effective resource allocation, community representation, improved decision-making, and enhanced information sharing. The Public Safety Building will facilitate a more holistic and coordinated response, leading to better outcomes and increased resilience in the face of emergencies.

### **Part G: Funding Sources:**

Both Chatham County and HAAF agree that ensuring the Emergency Operations Center and the E-911 Dispatch functions are kept in Chatham County is a critical piece of the community's emergency operations. By doing so, this allows for a faster response for those living off post throughout Chatham County during an emergency, post disaster, and while providing secure day-to-day operations. Recognizing the need for a local, improved facility, Chatham County has itself obligated \$53 million through Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) and Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding as non-federal cash match for the project.

Chatham County is not only committed to completing construction but is also obligated by law and the desire of the voters to complete the CCPSB. Chatham County voters approved the collection of SPLOST dollars to fund the design and construction of the facility. SPLOST is an optional one percent (1%) County sales tax used to fund capital outlay projects. The tax is imposed when a referendum is passed by the voters of the county and includes the projects to be completed with the tax proceeds. The voters of Chatham County approved the SPLOST collection and the use of SPLOST revenue for the construction of the public safety facility. With a small portion already being expended on design and permitting of the facility, Chatham County has a total of \$51,965,571 available to be used as Chatham's funding match for the project.

As a local government Chatham County can issue bonds for this project's funding gap. Under state law, the County's legal debt margin is 10% of total assessed property digest values.

Chatham County’s financial condition is demonstrated by the Aa1 rating of its bonds by Moody’s Investor Services, which was upgraded in August 2020. In August 2020, Standard and Poor’s reaffirmed Chatham County’s rating of AA+. Chatham County limits debt to no more than .75 % of total full digest value. In addition, Chatham County is committed to addressing the level of indebtedness the County can reasonably expect to incur without jeopardizing its existing financial position and operational capabilities. Chatham County’s Board of Commission has adopted a maximum debt service level of 7% of the fund’s annual revenues and will seek to maintain debt service within those limits.

**Part H: Project Budget:**

At this time, the facility’s design is complete. Chatham County staff provides project administration. There are no costs associated with project administration in the grant application. The project budget includes building construction, utilities, sitework, permitting, furnishing, technology and contingency. In June 2022, Chatham County received a third-party cost estimate for the proposed facility. (Appendix 1)

The total estimated project cost is \$105,774,283 which includes:

Subtotal estimated construction costs	\$69,792,006 including:
Building construction	\$38,958,027
Utilities	\$ 5,777,344
Sitework	\$15,370,832
Design contingency thru bid	\$ 1,947,901
Owner’s construction contingency	\$ 7,737,902
 Subtotal estimated project costs	 \$35,982,277 including:
Soft costs	\$ 6,252,354
FF&E	\$ 5,972,906
Technology	\$14,552,017
Communications towers	\$ 1,205,000
Additional building	\$ 8,000,000
 Chatham County Available Funds	 \$51,965,571
Commitment from Savannah Airport Commission	\$ 8,355,274
FEMA CCPSB Building Grant*	\$ 1,200,000
Gap in Funding	\$44,253,438

\*Chatham County was able to secure FEMA funds of \$1.2 million through congressional directed earmark funds specific to construction of the Public Safety Building in early 2023.

Chatham County is requesting \$20,000,000 of the Defense Community Infrastructure Pilot funds to assist in filling the gap to complete the initial phase of the construction. Chatham County will bond the remaining funds needed for construction. Chatham County has an excellent bond rating. See Part G for more information on funding sources.

**Part I: Project Development Schedule:**

Chatham County delivers projects with a design-bid-build delivery method. The CCPSB has been slated since 2016. Programming and design of the building is complete. A project schedule is attached as Appendix 2. Site permitting is nearly complete. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) issued a Letter of Map Revision Based on Fill (LOMR-F) and the permit for wetland impacts was issued by the US Army Corps of Engineers. (See Appendix 5). Additional site permits will be obtained from the City of Savannah and a building permit will be obtained from Chatham County’s Building Safety and

Regulatory Services. Both entities have reviewed the design and no significant issues were identified. Permits are expected by September 2023. Chatham County will issue an invitation to bid in November 2023. Following the award of the construction contract by the Chatham County Board of Commissioners, construction will begin in the first quarter of 2024 with plans for move-in by May 2025, just prior to hurricane season.

The proposed project complies with the current National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). See Appendix 3 for the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI). The Savannah Airport Commission is working with the Federal Aviation Administration to update the Environmental Assessment for the site. Completion and approval of the updated EA is expected prior to the grant award.

**Part J: Environmental Compliance:**

Chatham County is committed to complying with Federal requirements for the construction of the CCPSB. Chatham County understands the importance of meeting these requirements, which include the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards at 2 CFR Part 200, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and all appropriate Federal environmental and historic preservation laws, regulations, and Executive Orders.

Chatham County recognizes the significance of ensuring that all Federal funding is used appropriately and that projects are executed in accordance with all applicable laws, regulations, and executive orders. We are committed to working closely with our partners and stakeholders to ensure that the construction of the CCPSB adheres to all relevant Federal requirements and guidelines. Chatham is also committed to conducting thorough assessments of any potential environmental impacts that may result from this project. As such, we will work diligently to comply with all applicable Federal environmental and historic preservation laws, regulations, and executive orders. This includes but is not limited to conducting environmental assessments and obtaining all necessary permits and approvals.

- a. The Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)/ Record of Decision (ROD) in compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), is attached in Appendix 3. The Savannah Airport Commission is working with the Federal Aviation Administration to update the Environmental Assessment for the site.
- b. A Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Letter of Map Revision Based on Fill (LOMR-F) is included for the proposed project site. Appendix 4.
- c. A permit was obtained from the USACE for the required site fill. See Appendix 5 for a copy of the permit. As mentioned above, the associated fill was placed, and the wetland impacts are complete.

**Part K: Planning and Permitting Approvals:**

Chatham County complies with all local, state and federal regulations. Public facilities do not require the approval of the Chatham County – Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission. The building will be permitted by the Chatham County Building Safety and Regulatory Services after demonstrating compliance with the International Building Code and all local building codes and standards. The Savannah Airport Commission will also provide approval for the construction since the facility will be located on Airport property. In addition, the site is located within the municipal boundaries of the City of Savannah, so the city will issue a permit for the site work and approval for the water and sewer connections. All entities have reviewed the design and identified no reason permits will not be issued prior to issuance of the invitation to bid.

Adopted in 2021, Chatham County's *Plan 2040*, is the community's Comprehensive Plan or vision document for the County. Two Public Safety Goals within *Plan 2040* directly relate to the proposed public Safety Building and what services and outcomes it can provide to the community.

Goal 1: Ensure better quality of life through multifaceted strategies of public safety. The strategies include reducing crime by focusing on asset building, meeting community needs, expanding visibility and capacity of resources and programs provided by first responders, and building trust between law enforcement and residents.

Goal 3: Provide effective and efficient government services while ensuring that processes and procedures are planned and executed with transparency.

The services to be provided within the CCPSB facility are also included in Chatham County's Multijurisdictional Service Delivery Strategy (SDS), which is sub-component of the Chatham Community Comprehensive Plan. The SDS has been formally agreed upon through the execution of the intergovernmental agreement with eight municipalities and unincorporated Chatham all within Chatham County. Chatham also has a statewide assistance and Mutual Aid Agreement / Memorandum of Understanding with the Chatham Emergency Management Agency and Georgia Emergency Management Agency.

And lastly, the proposed facility will aid in meeting the Chatham Emergency Management Agency's third goal of "Maintaining a State of Readiness" in the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan.

- 3.1 Improve the capability to respond to emergency events and to identify, arrange and track community-wide resources that could be available during emergency and disaster situations.
- 3.2 Ensure an effective and redundant emergency communications system that will establish, utilize, maintain, and augment backup communication methods.
- 3.3 Maintain the Emergency Operations Center at a constant state of readiness.

The building will comply with all local zoning ordinances as well as those mandated by the Savannah Airport Commission. Chatham County and Savannah Airport Commission have a fifty-year land lease agreement for the purposes of the Public Safety Building. As stated in the agreement, Chatham County will lease parcels of land from the Savannah Airport Commission for construction and operation of the CCPSB. The County will sublease a portion of the building to the Savannah Airport Commission for the purposes of housing the Savannah Airport Commission's Department of Public Safety and Airport Emergency Operations Center.

#### **Part L: Grants Management:**

Chatham County is in compliance in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles in the United States of America; the standards applicable to financial audits contained in Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States, and the audit requirements of the Title 2 U.C. Code of Federal Regulations Part 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

Chatham County's staff and program managers have extensive experience in managing federal and state grants across multiple departments and units of government to include; a number of accountability courts (Drug, Veterans', Mental Health and DUI), grants supporting the implementation of co-responder units which connect mental health providers with first responders, grant awards to enhance transportation, many

of which rely on relationships between the members of the Criminal Justice community and Savannah's services and non-profit sectors.

Chatham County uses the Standards for Internal Control in the Federal Government as their guide to establishing and maintaining an effective internal control system. As such, the Chatham County control system, has extensive fiscal and administrative controls in twelve compliance areas including allowed and un-allowed activities, allowable cost/cost principles, and cash managements to manage and approve the use of Federal funding. The policies help our organization to adapt to shifting environments, evolving demands, changing risk and new priorities.

The Chatham County Department of Engineering successfully manages grant administration for extensive municipal and joint projects within the County. Chatham was awarded State and Federal Transportation grants in excess of \$15,000,000 over the past 10 years. These funds were used for preliminary engineering, right of way acquisition and construction of motorized and non-motorized transportation projects. Staff prepares grant applications and manages projects meeting all state and federal documentation requirements. And most notably, the County has never been required to return funds for non-compliance.

Chatham County Engineering also administers the County's Capital Improvement Program. The Department employs six professional engineers, an architect, and two construction project managers to provide project management. With an average of 25 years each, staff has over 220 years of combined experience in delivering facilities and infrastructure projects. The Department manages capital projects from concept through construction. Examples of Projects include:

1. **Chatham County Detention Center Expansion, Phase I:** Project included a 325,000 square feet addition and 71,000 square feet renovation to add over 1,000 beds and supporting services.
2. **Memorial Stadium.** The project included the demolition of the existing Memorial Stadium and construction of a new Stadium with 5,000 seating capacity. Besides the Grandstand metal bleachers, the project includes a Synthetic Turf Field for Football, Soccer and Lacrosse, Press Box, Officials Rooms and a Memorial. A two-story End Zone building of 10,900 sq ft, houses Team Locker Rooms, Restrooms, Concessions, and 4,700 sq ft Community Center / Multipurpose Room and offices for the Parks and Recreation Department.
3. **Chatham County Detention Center Phase II.** The project included the re-roofing of the existing complex; partial renovation of Unit 5 of about 24,000 sq ft to housework Release (64 male, 16 female), New Hope (16 male, 16 female), an 1,800 sq ft addition to re-accommodate Internal Affairs, new security, and fire sprinkler systems; a new K9 facility with 12 indoor and outdoor kennels; and partial replacement of existing exterior doors, frames and canopies.
4. **Construction of a new \$88 million Trial Court Building** is set for completion in the Spring of 2024. The project is funded by SPLOST 5 and SPLOST 7 and is within budget. Inside the new 155-thousand square foot courthouse there will be four State and eight Superior Court courtrooms, as well as offices for State and Superior Court Clerks, Superior Court Administration and other supporting spaces. The building pays homage to Savannah's founder, General James Oglethorpe and his Oglethorpe Plan by incorporating an atrium between the north and south block, representing York Lane which has been lost to previous construction.

The Engineering Department successfully manages grant administration. Examples of grant awards include:

1. The County was awarded State and Federal Transportation grants of more than \$15M over the past 10 years. These funds were used for preliminary engineering, right of way acquisition and construction of motorized and non-motorized transportation projects.

2. The County was awarded the One Georgia economic development grant which was a total of \$10.5M from the State of Georgia for the construction of the Hutchinson Island Riverwalk. Staff successfully managed the design and construction of the project.
3. Staff prepared the grant applications and managed the projects meeting all state and federal documentation requirements. The County has never been required to return funds for non-compliance.

Chatham County's Emergency Management Agency (CEMA), has a staff of 14 individuals, has more than 60 years' experience collectively in emergency management, coordinated response, hazard mitigation and planning. Over the past 15 years, CEMA has been successful in receiving 52 grants totaling over \$18M with every grant being closed successfully with no audit findings.

**Part M: Submitting Official:**

As per affirmative motion and unanimous vote by the Chatham County Board of Commission on Friday June 9, 2023 the Chairman has authorization to submit the request for funds in support of construction of the Chatham County Public Safety Building. The enclosed resolution confirms that there are secured funds to be used as match dollars for the purpose of construction. A copy of the resolution is included as Attachment D.

**Part N: National Security Waiver Attestation: N/A**

**Part O: Attachments:**

A. Attachments

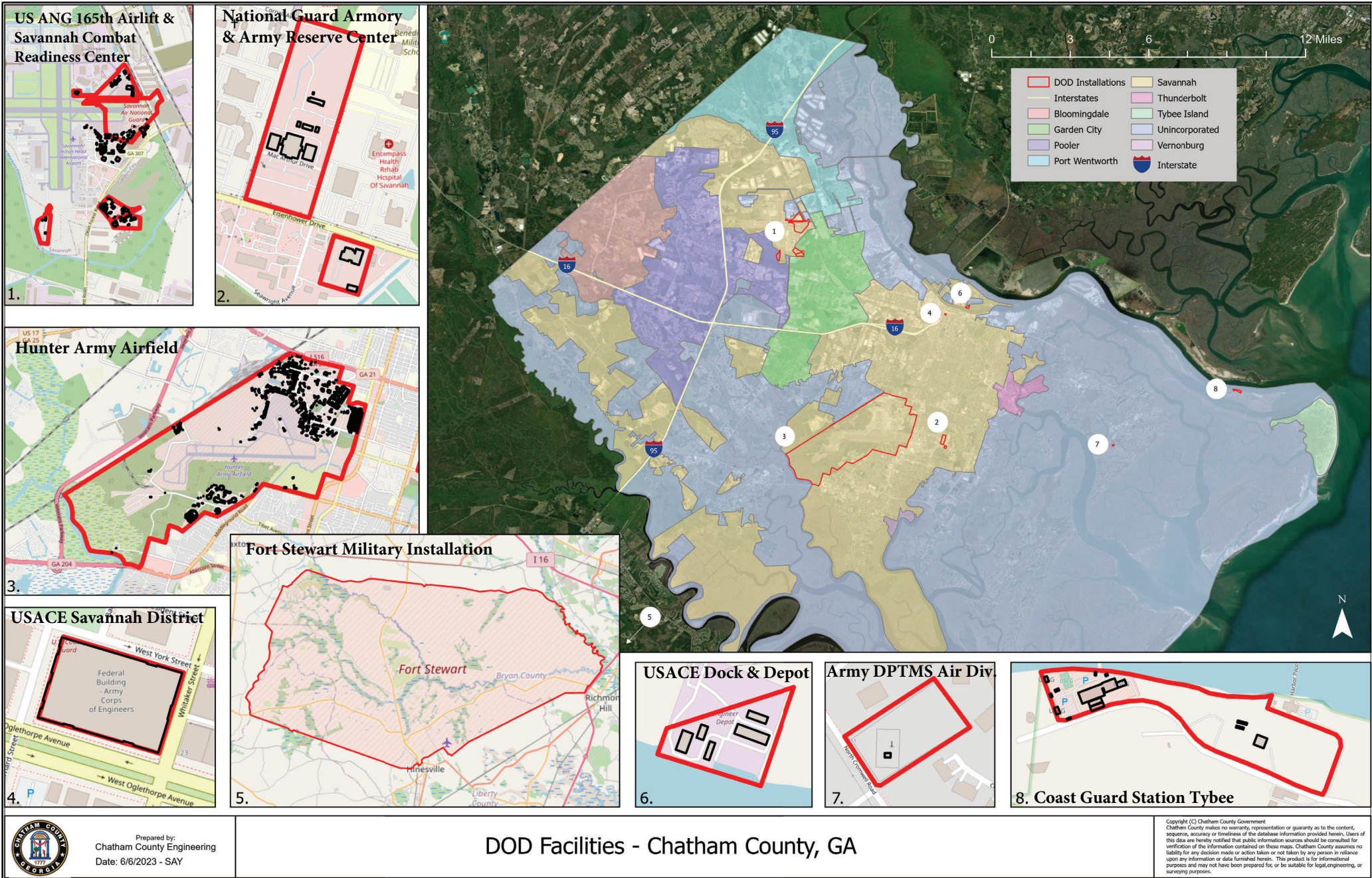
- a. Chatham County Map with DOD Facilities
- b. Installation Endorsement Letter
- c. CCPSB Site Map & Renderings
- d. Chatham County Resolution

B. Appendix

1. Third Party Cost Estimate, Project Budget
2. Project Timeline/Schedule
3. Environmental Assessment (EA) and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)
4. LOMR-F
5. USACE Permit



# Attachment A – Chatham County, GA DOD Facilities



Prepared by:  
Chatham County Engineering  
Date: 6/6/2023 - SAY

## DOD Facilities - Chatham County, GA

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY INSTALLATION MANAGEMENT COMMAND  
HEADQUARTERS, U.S. ARMY GARRISON, FORT STEWART/HUNTER ARMY AIRFIELD  
1791 GULICK AVENUE  
FORT STEWART, GEORGIA 31314

20 June 2023

Adam Wright  
Office of Local Defense Cooperation  
2231 Crystal Drive, Suite 520  
Arlington, VA 22202-3711

Dear Mr. Wright,

The request of Chatham County to receive funding for a Multi-Agency Public Safety Building will provide resources and enhancement of services year-round through partnerships and aligns with the goals of the installation for emergency response. The ability of Hunter Army Airfield to perform its mission as a power projection platform is enabled by the community's ability to respond in emergency situations. It is estimated that 70% of the military and the civilian work force live off the installation and depend on Chatham County for incident response and recovery operations.

The potential for natural threats and hazards impacting Chatham County has the probability of producing hardships for the more than 295,000 residents, to include the supported local military population and their families. Chatham County has assessed the current emergency operations center, E 9-1-1 dispatch, and communication facilities as small, fragmented, and antiquated. The installation recognizes these concerns increase the vulnerability of Chatham County, to include Hunter Army Airfield.

The project will enhance and expand all hazard response capabilities in support of the local military and civilian communities, as well as emergency providers. The proposed Public Safety Building will also afford Hunter Army Airfield an alternate operational area to ensure minimal interruptions to the military mission.

The installation point of contact is Ms. Jennifer Peterson, Plans, Analysis and Integration Chief, Jennifer.M.Peterson62.civ@army.mil, (912) 767-8800.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Manuel F. Ramirez", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Manuel F. Ramirez  
Colonel, U.S. Army  
Commanding











# Attachment C – Chatham County EOC & E-911 Center Floor Plan



Dedicated DOD Space

## Spaces

-  Lobby
-  Training / Media Room
-  EOC
-  Policy Group Conference Room
-  Central Corridor
-  SAC APD Squad Room
-  Dispatch
-  Central Break Room & Kitchen
-  Typical Restroom

A RESOLUTION TO DOCUMENT MONETARY CONTRIBUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE  
CHATHAM COUNTY PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING AND TO AUTHORIZE SUBMITTAL OF AN  
APPLICATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE – DEFENSE COMMUNITY  
INFRASTRUCURE PROGRAM.

WHEREAS, the governing authority of the County of Chatham, Georgia is the Board of Commissioners (“County”); and

WHEREAS, the Department of Defense aids state and local governments to address deficiencies in community infrastructure supportive of military installation,

WHEREAS, the County desires to support our military and first responders by ensuring continuity of operations for government services and minimizing potential interruptions; and

WHEREAS, Chatham County faces a variety of natural threats and hazards as well as the potential for man-made disasters. These threats have the probability of producing hardships for Chatham's 291,012 citizens by threatening their homes and families: and

WHEREAS, Daily activities of the County E-911 dispatch operations and the County Emergency Operations Center are housed in a facility that is too small for the intended operations and too vulnerable to significant threats; and

WHEREAS, Recognizing the need for an improved facility, the County has set aside \$53 million through SPLOST and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and commits these funds as match for the grant application, and

WHEREAS, the proposed 83,000 square foot County Multi-Agency Public Safety Building is designed to provide an expanded and more secure facility that is ready for construction once funds are secure; and

WHEREAS, this resolution will benefit the health, safety and welfare of residents in the County

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT AND IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED THAT: the County hereby confirms non-federal cash to support the Public Safety Building and therefore authorizes submittal of the application to Department of Defense.

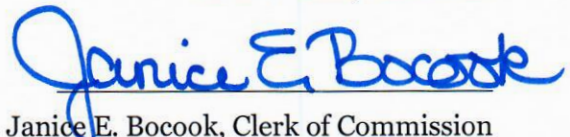
So Resolved, this 9<sup>th</sup> day of June 2023.

County of Chatham, Georgia



Chester Ellis, Chairman

ATTEST:



Janice E. Bocoock, Clerk of Commission  
Chatham County Board of Commissioners

