



Chatham County - Savannah  
Metropolitan Planning Commission

# MPC

## 2022 Annual Report

**MELANIE WILSON**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**DWAYNE STEPHENS**  
CHAIRMAN

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# About Us

The Chatham County–Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) was jointly created in 1955 by the Board of Commissioners of Chatham County and the Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah to develop a Master Plan for the orderly growth of the district, and the residential and industrial development of the city and the unincorporated portions of the County.

# Our Vision

The Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission will be a leader in planning, developing, and preserving a greater community through partnerships and an open process.

# Our Mission

"It shall be the mission of the Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission to provide an accessible planning process, sound professional planning products, and recommendations to ensure a greater quality of life for all to enjoy a community that is historic, sustainable, mobile, and prosperous. "  
- MPC BYLAWS: October 1, 1974

## 2022- 2023 MPC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Mr. Dwayne Stephens, *Chairman***  
*City of Savannah*

**Mr. Travis Coles, *Vice-Chairman***  
*City of Savannah*

**Ms. Elizabeth Epstein, *Treasurer***  
*City of Savannah*

**Mr. Tom Woiwode, *Secretary***  
*Chatham County*

**Ms. Lauren Boles**  
*City of Savannah*

**Mr. Shedrick Coleman**  
*Chatham County*

**Mr. Joseph Ervin**  
*City of Savannah*

**Ms. Karen Jarrett**  
*City of Savannah*

**Mr. Wayne Noha**  
*Chatham County*

**Mr. Jeff Notrica**  
*Chatham County*

**Mr. Joseph Welch**  
*Chatham County*

**Mr. Michael Kaigler, *County Manager***  
*Ex-Officio*

**Mr. Jay Melder, *City Manager***  
*Ex-Officio*

# A THANK YOU

The past year has been a rollercoaster of a ride that greatly impacted the economy and business as a whole. Even with the tumultuous times of 2022, the MPC staff shone brightly with perseverance, creativity, and commitment. The MPC staff was busy with new development applications, the rehabilitation of historic structures, building of carriage houses, and rezoning applications. They completed city and county redistricting, worked on transportation freight plans, attended numerous public outreach and neighborhood meetings, conducted surveys, responded to hundreds of public inquiries, and effectively managed the 86 board meetings. In addition, they impacted our community through participation in personal projects and endeavors such as food drives, United Way, the Savannah Technical College Foundation, CASA, The Homeless Authority and many others.

The success of the MPC is a direct result of the time, hard work, and dedication that this talented group of individuals continue to give to our community. Join me in applauding everyone who is part of the MPC. Thank you for all you do!

"I am pleased to present the MPC's 2022 Annual Report."

Melanie Wilson, Executive Director



# Boards and Commissions



METROPOLITAN  
PLANNING  
COMMISSION



SAGIS



- TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
- CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION
- ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND FREIGHT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
- MPC TRANSPORTATION



SAVANNAH  
HISTORIC DISTRICT  
BOARD OF REVIEW



HISTORIC SITE AND  
MONUMENT  
COMMISSION



SAVANNAH  
HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
COMMISSION



CHATHAM COUNTY  
HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION  
COMMISSION



CITY OF SAVANNAH  
ZONING BOARD OF  
APPEALS



CHATHAM COUNTY  
ZONING BOARD OF  
APPEALS

# Available Services



## HISTORIC

### PRESERVATION

- REVIEW COAS
- REVIEW MARKERS, MONUMENTS & PUBLIC ART
- HISTORIC RESOURCE



## SAGIS

- DATABASE ADMINISTRATION
- PROPERTY MAP VIEWER
- SPATIAL ANALYSIS



## DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

- SUBDIVISION REVIEW
- ZONING | SUBDIVISION ORDINANCE DEVELOPMENT
- EXISTING DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESSES



## TRANSPORTATION PLANNING + CORE MPO

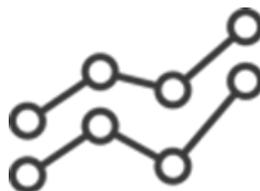
- MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING
- CONGESTION MANAGEMENT
- PROJECT SELECTION TRAFFIC FORECASTING
- TRAFFIC IMPACT REVIEW



## GRANT WRITING ASSISTANCE + PROJECT OVERSIGHT



## EDUCATION + OUTREACH



## DATA COMPILATION



## TRAINING

# Highlights

- MPC Board Retreat
- Conducted General Policy and Procedures Training for all Boards
- Developed a Growth Plan for the City of Bloomington
- Completed Redistricting for City and County
- Completed Yamacraw Village Section 106 Review
- National Trust Preservation Fund Grant – “Savannah History: Instagram Video Series”
- Drafted Disaster Preparedness Plan for Historic and Cultural Resources
- Completed Certified Local Government Grant to Survey Unincorporated Chatham County’s Historic Resources
- Completed Victorian Historic District survey (Buildings older than 40 years of age)
- 2023 Historic Preservation Department Calendar – “Lost Places”
- County and City Ordinance Revisions & Updates
- Reestablishing the Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission
- Historic Preservation Month – YouTube Video Series
- Completed Indian Street Area Parking Study
- Completed Harris Street Area Parking Study
- Held Downtown Development Stakeholder Meetings
- Neighborhood Association Project Updates
- Received Historic Grants funding
- Moving Forward Together 2050
- Updated MPO Public Participation Plan
- Conducted Bi-monthly Staff Lunch and Learn training
- Flooding Dynamic Modeling for Optimized Planning of CORE MPO Transportation Infrastructure Systems
- US 80 Study
- Freight Plan Update



Leah Michalak,  
Director of Historic  
Preservation

# Historic Preservation

The Historic Preservation Department is responsible for the preservation of the City of Savannah and Chatham County's historic resources.

- protects architectural integrity and historic character through the use of local zoning ordinances
- reviews and approves Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior building changes within Local Historic Districts and other designated Historic Properties through Savannah and Chatham County
- coordinates historic resource identification
- assists in drafting National Register nominations
- drafts ordinances that affect historic resources
- applies for grants
- provides training for boards and the public
- performs Section 106 reviews for the city's Housing Department.





Marcus Lotson,  
Director of Development  
Service

# Development Services

Development Services serves as conduit for various commissions to neighborhood groups, the development community, property owners and local governments that we serve.

- Relays processes in site planning, zoning, subdivision of land and other aspects of development.
- Ensures compliance with ordinances that govern development in unincorporated Chatham County and the City of Savannah.
- Works with county and city to manage impacts, provide for public input, and process requests through appropriate channels.
- Provides analysis and recommendations to the Planning Commission as a basis for decisions made by the Chatham County Commission and Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Savannah.
- Serves a similar role to the City and County Zoning Boards of Appeal who are tasked with considering variances from development standards and appeals of decisions by administrators and other boards.





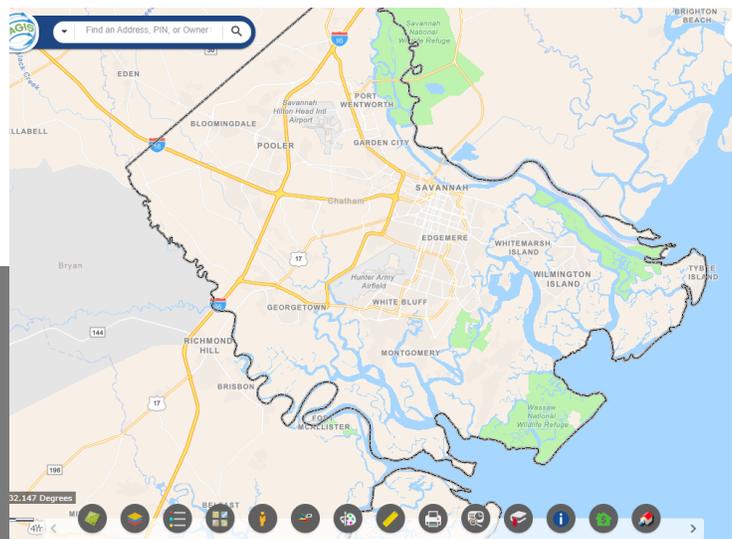
Lara Hall,  
Director of SAGIS



377,176  
SAGIS  
Property  
View Hits

# SAGIS (Savannah Geographic Information System

The MPC, City of Savannah, and Chatham County participate in a partnership that established a regional Geographic Information System (GIS), used for economic development, infrastructure management, and community planning. We maintain standards, manage data, support geospatial education, and coordinate geospatial projects that affect the greater Chatham County/Savannah area. SAGIS provides access to geospatial data through the SAGIS Map Viewer and the Open Data site. The Map Viewer contains data layers such as parcels, zoning, roads, census data, and more.





Wykoda Wang,  
Director of  
Transportation

# Transportation

The Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO) is the transportation planning body for the Savannah region. The MPO's current planning boundary includes all of Chatham County, and portions of Effingham and Bryan Counties (including Richmond Hill). The MPO boundary is expected to be updated after the Census Bureau releases the 2020 Savannah Urban Area boundary. The CORE MPO planning process focuses on identifying deficiencies in the transportation system, recommending projects that address the deficiencies, and securing funding for implementing improvement projects. The MPO produces the long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP - the largest and most comprehensive), the short-range Transportation Improvement Program (subset of MTP, covering four years), the Participation Plan (public involvement document), and the Unified Planning Work Program (staff budget document).



# PROJECTS

## City of Bloomingdale Urban Growth Strategy Plan

The MPC and the City of Bloomingdale entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement for an Urban Growth Strategy Plan to help the city determine its future growth, conservation, implications of greenfield industrial and residential development, and contained suggestions and recommendations for implementation. Areas addressed included city's current zoning, existing and future land use and annexations, existing water/sewer service areas, parcel ownership, and city approved industrial/residential developments.

## NPDES Stormwater Management Program

To maintain compliance with the City's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) and related Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GA EPD) issued permit, the City of Savannah maintains an agreement with the MPC to provide assistance with its MS4/Stormwater program.

The MPC serves as liaison between City of Bloomingdale and the GA EPD for stormwater permit related inquiries and clarification, technical assistance with Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination monitoring; informal stormwater field audit and assessment, stormwater rules and related ordinances, trainings, on-call assistance for Stormwater, Erosion and Sedimentation Control, other related environmental issues and reporting to the GA EPD.

## Service Delivery Strategy

The MPC is charged with overseeing updates to the Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) with Chatham County and the other municipalities of Chatham County. The MPC coordinated the collection of the updated data and compiled the information for submission to the DCA for review and approval.

## Preservation Month

MPC celebrated Preservation Month with a series of "Town Talks" created for YouTube and daily Instagram posts.

## Urban Flooding Model Study

CORE MPO kicked-off a regional Urban Flooding Model Study that will serve as a critical document for decision-planning on flood risk management, operational response, and resilience planning for the CORE MPO planning area. The study is expected to be completed in late 2023.

# PROJECTS

## Yamacraw 106

In July, the Housing Authority of Savannah (HAS) initiated a Section 106 Review request with the MPC in consideration of the demolition and reconstruction of the Yamacraw Village. Consideration included Native American history, African American history, the Revolutionary War, and Federally funded housing projects. Historic properties in the Area of Potential Effect include The Scarborough House, Greyhound Station, First Bryan Baptist Church, and many others.

## The Disaster Preparedness Plan for Historic and Cultural Resources

The Disaster Preparedness Plan for Historic and Cultural Resources, created in 2022, will serve as a partner document to the CEMA Multi-Jurisdictional Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan, and includes goals and strategies to aid local law and policy makers in changing current ordinances and guidelines. Two recommendations to further implement in the future are:

- Revise each Historic District section of the ordinance to include appropriate approaches for hazard mitigation for historic and cultural resources.
- Create and make publicly available guides for flood, fire, wind, and other hazard protection and adaptation measures for historic and cultural resources.

## Regional Freight Transportation Plan Update

CORE MPO kicked off the Regional Freight Transportation Plan update in April 2022. The freight plan will identify current and projected freight impacts and improvement needs and develop policy, land use and infrastructure improvement recommendations related to freight. The final infrastructure recommendations will be incorporated into CORE MPO's plans and programs for implementation. The project team conducted stakeholder and public surveys, stakeholder interviews, and technical analysis. Several technical memos detailing the freight needs have been produced and are available for review on the MPO website. The freight plan is expected to be completed in Summer of 2023.

## Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Update

The Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and the Thoroughfare Plan are the bike and pedestrian plans for the Savannah region for better and safer infrastructure. Updates to the plans have involved steering committee meetings and looking into local crash data to identify problem areas for cyclists and pedestrians. The projected adoption date for these plans is June 2023.

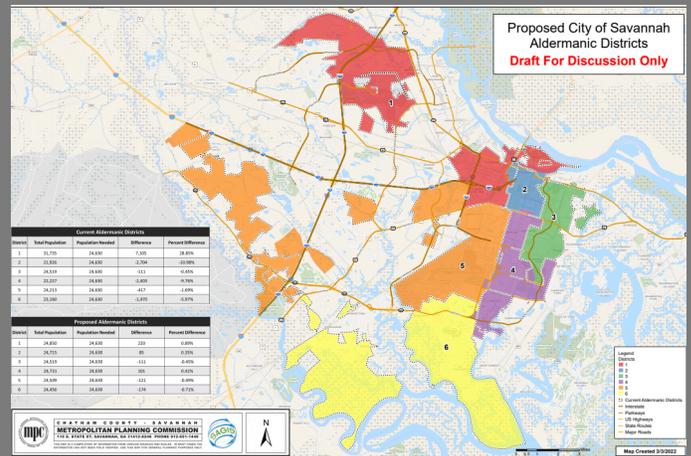
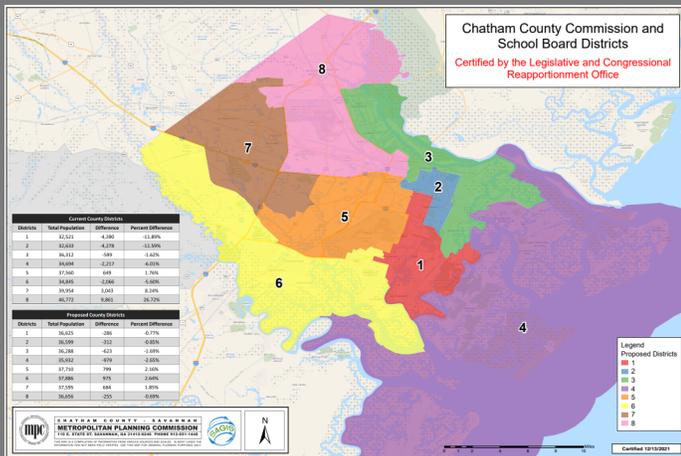
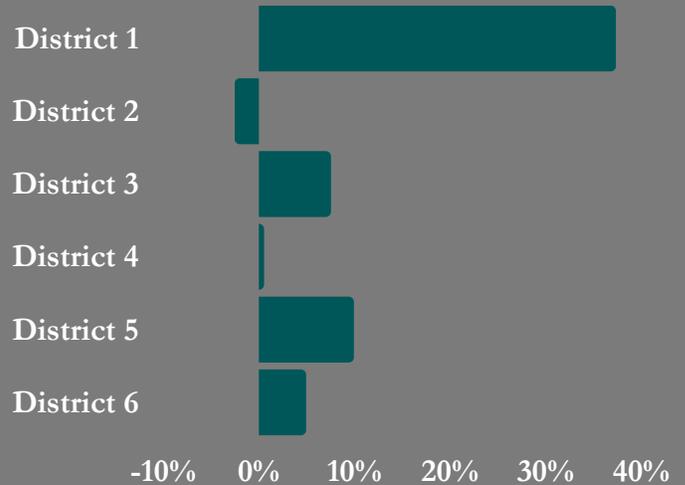
# Redistricting in 2022

In 2021, SAGIS began work with the County Commission and School Board to complete the redistricting process for voting districts. The new Commission and School Board district boundaries were adopted in March 2022 and became effective in January 2023. While County districts were being finalized, work began with the City of Savannah Aldermen to complete required redistricting for the Aldermanic boundaries.

Chatham County  
2020 Population 295,291  
(11.8% growth since 2010)

City of Savannah  
2020 Population 147,780  
(8.4% growth since 2010)

## DISTRICT POPULATION CHANGES FROM 2010 TO 2020



The new district maps can be found on the MPC website at <https://www.thempc.org/Sagis/Gallery>.

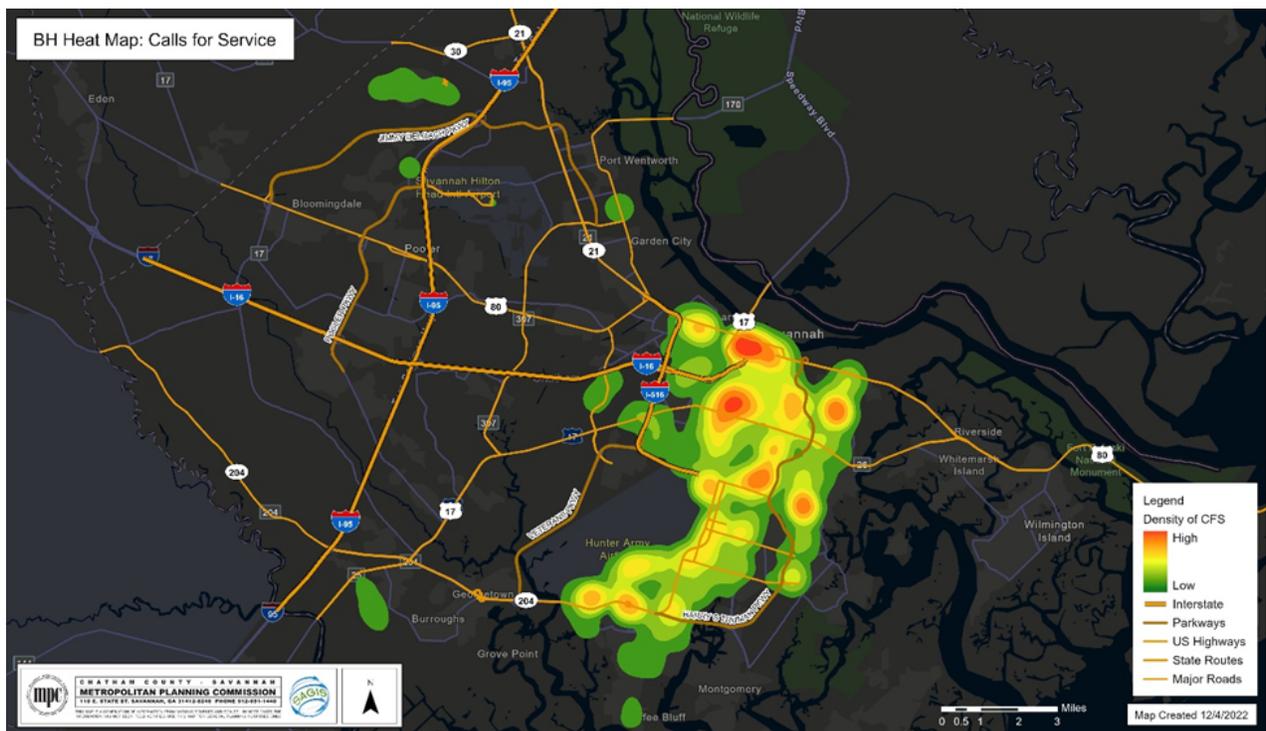
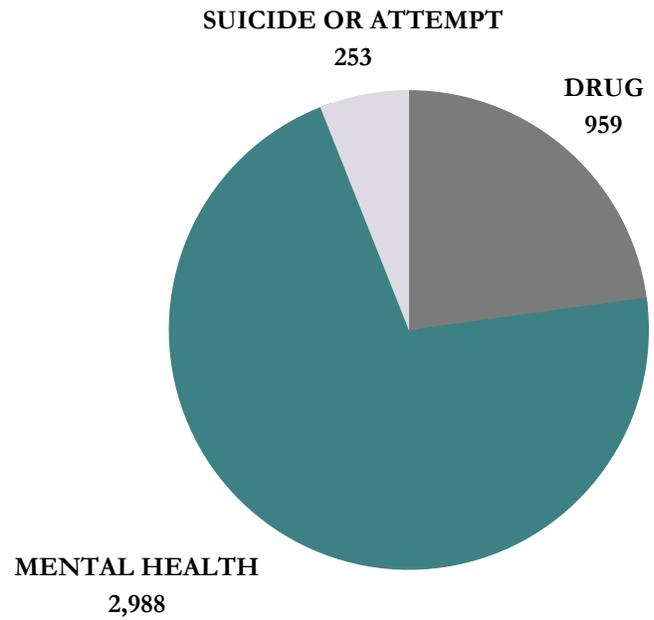
# BHU Support

The Savannah Police Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) has provided support for child safety and child and family well-being in our community since 2019 with the overall goal of reducing jail time for adults and youth through alternative services for mental health and substance abuse needs. SAGIS assists this program by:

- exporting and processing data from Savannah Police, Emergency Dispatch, and Emergency Medical Services.
- providing analysis that identifies patterns in locations, demographics, changes in resource needs, and potential hotspots of different types of emergency needs.

## TOTAL CALLS TRACKED 2022

4,200



Spatial analysis of the data allows first responders and other BHU personnel to identify where the greatest need is in our community.

# 2050 MTP Update

CORE MPO kicked off updating the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), known as the Moving Forward Together 2050 Plan. This document will span the next 25 years, detailing proposed projects, funding, and local transportation data for the Savannah region.

400+ survey responses since  
September 2022

## Maintaining and Updating TIP



The TIP is a four-year (FY2021-2024), fiscally constrained, short-range program, providing funding and implementation information for CORE MPO's prioritized list of multimodal transportation projects - road, resurfacing, signalization, bridge, bicycle & pedestrian, transit, and safety improvements.

40 TIP amendments and  
modifications in 2022

In fall 2022, CORE MPO held Calls for Projects for the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) Y230 and Transportation Alternatives (TA) Y301 federal programs. 17 eligible applications were screened and evaluated with the highest ranked ones being awarded funds. Some of the awarded projects were amended into the FY2021 - 2024 TIP in December 2022. Other projects awarded funds outside of the current TIP cycle will be programmed in the FY 2024 - 2027 TIP.

Many of these projects provide regional connectivity, safety improvements, and infrastructure maintenance.

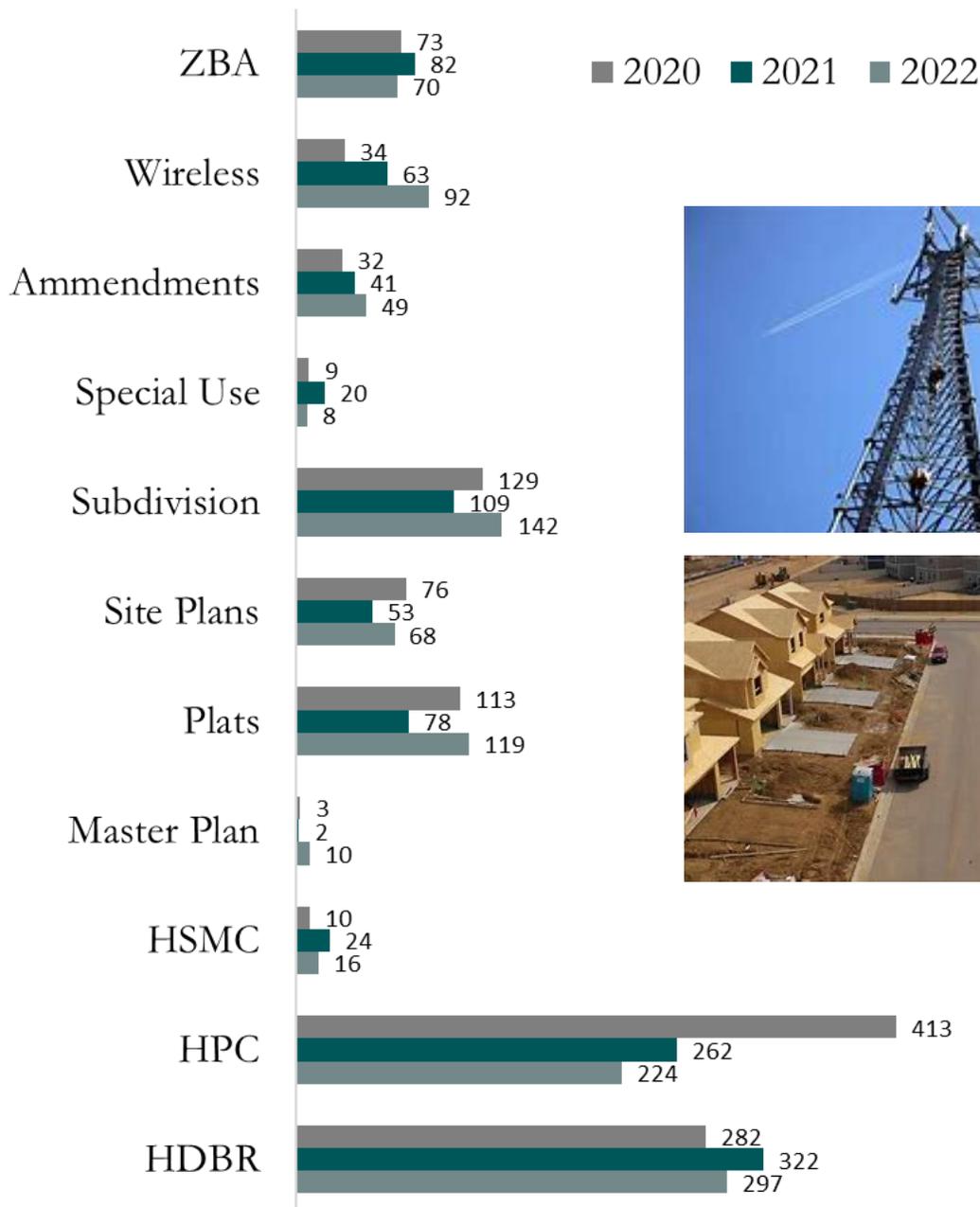
# Applications

In 2022, the numbers for applications received by our office showed an increase in new developments and expansion of existing infrastructure for:

- various subdivisions
- wireless towers
- site plans
- master plans

The rise in the number of applications for subdivisions indicates a trend towards more residential and commercial developments. The increase in applications for wireless towers is an indication of a growing need for high-speed internet access and better network coverage.

The increase in master plan applications indicates a growing trend toward planning and designing entire communities or developments. This involves comprehensive planning and collaboration with various stakeholders to create a cohesive vision for a particular area.



# IMPACT

## OUTREACH

## APPLICATIONS

## GROWTH

67.3k Website Views	1095 Total Applications	2,891 Addresses Created
1,326 MPC Visitors	454 Signs Posted	1,400 Maps Produced
1.79K Webinar Views	7.15K Mailouts	~\$250M Transportation Projects Programmed
2,497 Phone Calls	439 Development Reviews	8+ Transportation Projects Implemented

# 2023

## WHERE ARE WE GOING?

- Adopt the FY24 Unified Planning Work Program
- Moving Forward Together 2050
- Savannah Police Department Behavioral Health Unit (BHU)
- Continue to Develop Partnerships
- City of Savannah and Chatham County Ongoing Zoning Ordinance Amendments
- MPC/MPO Staff Training, Board Training
- Virtual Lunch & Learn Meetings
- Update Technology
- Coordinate with County and City to Update Processes for Development Submissions
- Update to MPO Reapportionment, Boundaries, and Bylaws
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) FY 2021–2024 Amendments
- Data Gathering
- Judicial Training
- Chatham County Historic Preservation Commission
- CERN
- Urban Flooding Model



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