

Our Vision for Chatham County

The Chatham County Republican Party will support, promote, and work to enact the following actions to improve conditions in Chatham County and support the rights and opportunities of its citizens. We encourage all Republican candidates and office holders to support these reforms and to work toward their implementation. Our citizens will hold elected officials accountable for their success in reaching this vision.

Education

Initiate reforms to improve our school system.

- We support the Superintendent's efforts to streamline and improve the delivery of education and to improve the quality of education for all students.
- We support a return to discipline in the classroom, including but not limited to:
 - Administrators who back up the teacher's authority in the classroom
 - Alternative classrooms and schools for those who disrupt learning for others
 - School uniforms
- We support an independent and periodic audit of the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System to be sure that personnel records are complete and accurate.
- We support rewarding teachers for measurable, verifiable improvements in student performance.
- We support termination of non-performing teachers from the system.
- A determination should be made as to whether our bureaucracy is excessive by comparing our organization to other school districts of comparable size. Once this determination is made, we will support programs that reduce bureaucracy and overhead without reducing learning.
- Rather than raising taxes, we support seeking alternative sources of funds for new facilities.

Public Policy

Create and support policies that protect the rights and reduce the interference of government in the lives of citizens.

- We support accountability among public officials as to how tax money raised is spent and the success or failure of programs funded with tax dollars.
- We support prevention of the use of eminent domain for private development.
- We support informing citizens of their right to amend or repeal local laws by use of referendum under the Home Rule law.
- We support the establishment of a Direct Rule for Georgia to allow amendment, repeal and creation of legislation by direct public petition for ballot placement.

Economy

We support actions for positive economic development for the county.

- Despite the favorable 5.1% unemployment rate as of 12/15/05, tracking of employment figures should routinely include not only the number of jobs added in the county, but also the pay scales of those jobs to ensure that average wages continue to increase as employment increases.
- We encourage the county and state officials to hold the Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Savannah Economic Development Authority, and Chamber of Commerce accountable for bringing higher-paying employment into the area and to report on their progress on a regular basis.

Taxes

Establish a fair and equitable property tax system for Chatham County.

- The citizens of Chatham County and the local municipalities are sufficiently taxed. We would oppose any increase in taxes.
- Evaluate local implementation of the state's systems of determining commercial and residential property values to ensure equitable, accurate, and timely evaluations based on uniform and consistent criteria.
- Consider the use of impact fees on new residential developments to offset the cost of new public services needed as a result of growth.

Crime

Hold the City Council and County Commission accountable for reducing crime. Establish an annual goal for reducing crime in this county of at least 10% and report on the progress made in reaching that goal every quarter.

- This party will support all responsible efforts to reduce crime.
- We support employment of a full complement of patrol officers.
- We support a pay scale for police officers that will attract the quality officers we need, including college graduates.

ENDORSEMENTS

Otis Johnson Mayor

"I'm happy they are getting involved. I'm pleased that they are talking about constructive solutions."

*Savannah Morning News
February 9th, 2006*

David Gellatly Commissioner

"I whole-heartedly approve the *Vision for Chatham County*, presented by the Chatham County Republican Party."

Floyd Adams Former Mayor

"I support 80% of the *Vision for Chatham County*."

Helen Stone Commissioner

"I'm glad to see the Republican Party taking a pro-active stance on issues that are important in the community."

Frank Murray Former Commissioner

"Congratulations to the Chatham County Republican Party for their thoughtful and workable ideas presented and for stepping up to the plate to help implement their vision."