

Georgia Ports Authority approves US\$65.6 million investment in Ocean Terminal

March 27, 2024



The Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) has authorised contracts totalling US\$65.6 million for container yard enhancements at the Port of Savannah's Ocean Terminal, an 810,000 m² facility situated just downriver from GPA's primary container port.

"We're very pleased with the progress on improving Ocean Terminal's container handling capability. We're on track to see greater container capacity by late 2027," stated Griff Lynch, CEO and president of GPA.

GPA's Board of Directors approved three project components, encompassing earth compaction to prepare the site for container stacks, the removal of a former bridge pier, and preliminary utility installation behind the wharf structure.

Furthermore, funding for the work will be sourced from revenue bonds issued by GPA in 2022.

Previous upgrades at Ocean Terminal, which have been approved, include the purchase of eight ship-to-shore cranes, the refurbishment of the wharf structure, and the construction of an overpass for direct access to US 17. Upon completion of all the planned work, Ocean Terminal's annual capacity is set to increase from 300,000 to over 1.5 million TEUs.

"At Georgia Ports, we never stop investing in the future. As new and existing port users grow their trade through our terminals, we're ready to take on additional cargo, providing the world-class service that our customers have come to expect," stated Kent Fountain, board chairman of GPA.

Lynch informed the board that GPA expects March to mark the third consecutive month of growth. "With a positive showing in the calendar year to date, Savannah is building momentum toward a stronger second half of Fiscal Year 2024," he noted.

In addition, as part of a six-bill budget package passed by Congress on 8 March 2024, the ports of Brunswick and Savannah are set to benefit from a combined total of US\$82.7 million in federal funding for maintenance dredging and harbour enhancements.

Approximately US\$38 million will be allocated to the Port of Brunswick, with US\$11.35 million destined for the Brunswick Harbor Improvements project and an additional US\$26.6 million for dredging the federal waterway to its full authorized depth.

Moreover, construction has commenced on a larger U.S. Customs inspection facility at the Port of Savannah, which will double the size of its current location.

Valued at US\$44.5 million, the project involves relocating U.S. Customs operations from their current 12,000 m² facility on Garden City Terminal to a neighbouring 27,900 m² building. This expanded space will facilitate federal inspections conducted by Customs and other agencies such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Also, the Georgia Ports Authority has secured a US\$15 million federal grant to support the replacement of Berths 2 and 3 at the East River Terminal within the Port of Brunswick. This initiative aims to enhance safety and boost capacity for exporting wood pellets and peanut pellets, vital components of renewable energy sources.