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| **GPA marks sixth record year, reviews $142M improvement plan**  *Harbor deepening sees major progress in 2015* |
| **September 24, 2015** |
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| **Georgia Ports Authority Executive Director Curtis Foltz addresses more than 1,300 attendees during the 2015 State of the Port address, Thursday, Sept. 24, 2015, in Savannah, Ga. Foltz reported nearly 2,800 new jobs created and $619 million in industrial investment tied to a year of strong growth at the GPA.** |
| **Savannah, Ga. - Sept. 24, 2015 -** In his annual State of the Port address, Georgia Ports Authority Executive Director Curtis Foltz reported on a year of extraordinary growth, and provided a review of the $142 million fiscal year 2016 capital expenditure plan.    "Georgia is making the investments necessary to maintain and strengthen our position as the premier gateway for trade to the U.S. Southeast," said GPA Board Vice Chairman James Allgood. "Our port customers want partners who are investing not only for today, but for the long term. By expanding and modernizing our transportation network, we ensure the fast, reliable delivery of goods to important markets at home and abroad."    Included in the plan to significantly increase capacity at the Garden City Terminal is a new empty container depot that will add more than 15,000 twenty-foot equivalent container slots. Foltz also detailed plans for the new Gate 8 which will add eight additional interchange lanes by March of next year. In addition, the authority is expected to receive four new ship-to-shore cranes, for a total of 26, and 30 new rubber-tired gantry cranes for a total of 146 in FY16, Foltz said.    "In Fiscal Year 2015, we experienced unprecedented growth, with West Coast diversions to East Coast ports, a recovering U.S. economy and import market share gains leading to all-time highs in cargo volume," Foltz told a crowd of more than 1,300. "The fact we were able to handle this influx of business without congestion has opened doors to long-term opportunities for Georgia. This new improvement plan will continue to keep Savannah's capacity ahead of demand."    In FY2015, a record 3.66 million twenty-foot equivalent container units crossed the docks at the Port of Savannah - a jump of 17 percent, or more than half a million TEUs. Of that cargo, 369,347 containers moved by rail, an 11 percent increase over the previous year.    Between Savannah's Ocean Terminal and the Port of Brunswick, the GPA moved 714,008 units of autos and heavy machinery in FY15, also the highest volume ever. Thanks to new customers and growth in existing trade, automobile units increased by 29 percent at Ocean Terminal.    "None of this could have been done without the tremendous efforts of our employees, the strong partnership we have with the International Longshoremen's Association, and all the stakeholders who move cargo for us every day," Foltz said.    Total cargo across all terminals reached 31.7 million tons for the year, a 7.8 percent increase.    "Effective, efficient port services are an important lure for new business," Foltz said. "In fact, port-related expansions announced during FY15 will bring more than $619 million in private investment and more than 2,770 new jobs to Georgia."    The growth came in the form of warehouse and distribution centers for major retailers and logistics providers for refrigerated cargo, as well as automotive and other manufacturing sites.    Foltz also detailed progress toward deepening the Savannah Harbor. Earlier this month the 300-foot Great Lakes Dredge and Dock vessel the Alaska began work on a $134.5 million contract issued to dredge the 18.5-mile outer harbor to 49 feet at mean low water. Better accommodating Post-Panamax vessels in Savannah will reduce transportation costs for U.S. companies moving goods through the port by 20 to 40 percent.    Beyond the terminal gates, the state Department of Transportation is set to complete the Jimmy Deloach Parkway extension in 2016. The project will provide a direct route between Garden City Terminal and Interstates 95 and 16, separating truck and commuter traffic, and cutting transit time for both.    The Savannah State of the Port is a joint effort of the GPA and the Propeller Club.    "The Propeller Club of the United States Port of Savannah is honored to partner with the Georgia Ports Authority to host the State of the Port event again this year," said Propeller Club President Michael Forbes. "The Propeller Club is an international business network dedicated to the promotion of the maritime industry, commerce and global trade. The Propeller Club promotes the maritime industry through many of its programs and partnering with other similar organizations."    **GPA Records set in Fiscal Year 2015**   * 3.66 million twenty-foot equivalent units * 369,347 containers moved by rail * 714,008 units of roll-on/roll-off cargo * 31.69 million total tons  |  | | --- | |  | |