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## Chatham County, City of Savannah Break Ground on Early Childhood Learning Center

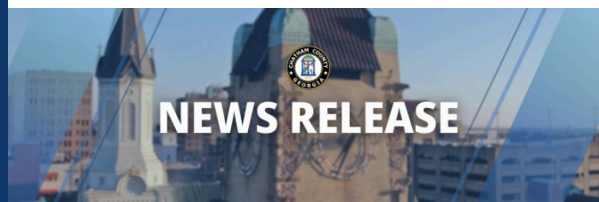
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### Chatham County Board of Commissioners

124 Bull Street, Savannah, GA 31401



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#### For Immediate Release

**Chatham County, GA (Dec. 4, 2024)** - Local leaders gathered on Tuesday, Dec. 3 to celebrate the groundbreaking of the Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC), a major joint initiative between Chatham County and the City of Savannah, aimed at addressing educational and economic health disparities in East Savannah.

Designed to provide quality education-based childcare services, the ECLC will serve children from six weeks to four years old, and will accommodate up to 144 children, adhering to Quality Rated standards set by the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning. The ECLC will be constructed on property provided through a long-term ground lease with the Housing Authority, underscoring the strong partnership between local government and community organizations.

State Senator Derek Mallow, who also serves as the Executive Director of East Savannah United, says the ECLC will give many children opportunities they wouldn't otherwise have.

"We want to make sure that every child has an opportunity and an opportunity to succeed, and so 50% of the children enrolled in this early learning center must be from this community and must be low income," Mallow said. "We want to ensure that everybody has a fighting chance on the east side, so that we can truly reduce poverty."

The ECLC will be supported primarily by SPLOST 7 tax dollars, with support from other funding sources from both the City of Savannah and Chatham County.

Chatham Commission Chairman Chester A. Ellis said he believes the investment will pay dividends for the future of the county.

"To invest in this facility is to invest in our future," Ellis said. "For the children are our future, and we need to teach them well so that they will know the way."

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