

IMAGINE *the* POSSIBLE

FAQs for 2024 GMA Annual Convention

Please check back periodically for updates to this document. We will continue to add information that you may find useful as we near the start of the 2024 GMA Annual Convention in Savannah June 21-25, 2024

[Updates below include class locations and transportation information.](#)

Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute:

Q. Are all training classes taking place at the Savannah Convention Center and the Westin Savannah Harbor?

A. No. On Saturday, June 22, the following classes will be held at the Marriott Riverfront Hotel from 8:15am to 11:15am.

- *Beyond the Beltway – Marriott Riverfront – Mercer*
- *Effective Practices for Municipal Operations – Marriott Riverfront – Savannah Ballroom B*
- *Employee Benefits 101 - Marriott Riverfront – Academy*
- *Entrepreneur Friendly Cities - Marriott Riverfront – Savannah Ballroom C*
- *Municipal Annexation - Marriott Riverfront – Pulaski*
- *Municipal Water and Wastewater Systems - Marriott Riverfront – Oglethorpe AB*
- *Open Records - Marriott Riverfront – Savannah Ballroom E*
- *Risk and Insurance 101 - Marriott Riverfront – Plaza*
- *Public Policy Development & Implementation Marriott Riverfront – Savannah Ballroom D*

Mobile App:

Q. Is there a mobile app we should download before arriving in Savannah?

A. Yes, GMA's new mobile app is FREE and available in the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store. Search Georgia Municipal Association and download the app for the up-to-the-minute schedule, session descriptions and listings of exhibitors and sponsors and all pertinent information while in Savannah.

Transportation:

Q. How do I get to the Convention Center if I am across the river?

A. You will be able to drive, take the river ferry or the hotel shuttles to get from the hotels across the river to the Convention Center. Schedules are listed below:

Ground Transportation

	Express Schedule	Standard Schedule
Thursday, June 20		2:30pm – 7:30pm
Friday, June 21	6:00am-7:00pm	-
Saturday, June 22	6:00am-7:00pm	-
Sunday, June 23	6:00am-11:00am 2:00pm-6:00pm	11:00am-3:00pm
Monday, June 24	7:00am-10:00pm	-
Tuesday, June 25	-	6:30am-12:30pm

Red Route

DoubleTree by Hilton / Hilton Garden Inn:

Shuttle stop left side of Montgomery St. before entering Franklin Square
Water Ferry stop City Hall

Holiday Inn Historic District:

Shuttle stop in front of Ships of the Sea Museum on MLK BLVD

Water Ferry stop City Hall

JW Marriott:

Shuttle stop on River Street in front of Chart House restaurant
Water Ferry stop City Hall

Purple Route

Savannah Marriott Riverfront / Homewood Suites:

Shuttle stop green bench on General McIntosh Blvd.

Water Ferry stop City Hall

The Kimpton Brice Hotel:

Shuttle stop in front of hotel
Water Ferry stop Waiving Girl

Thompson Hotel:

Shuttle stop in front of hotel
Water Ferry stop Waiving Girl

Orange Route

Hyatt Regency:

Shuttle stop in front of the Bohemian Hotel

Water Ferry stop City Hall

Hampton Inn (Bay St) /

Holiday Inn Express:

Shuttle stop on Abercorn St. before you enter Reynolds Square

Water Ferry stop City Hall

Embassy Suite / Hampton

Inn & Suite:

Shuttle stop on W. Oglethorpe in front of Embassy Suites
Water Ferry stop City Hall

Ferry Schedule

	Express Schedule (2 ferries, 2 routes) City Hall to SCC Waving Girl to SCC	Standard Schedule 1 ferry, 1 route to all three stops	Limited Service ONLY City Hall to SCC ONLY
Thursday, June 20	2:00pm-7:00pm	7:00am-2:00pm	7:00pm-Midnight
Friday, June 21	6:00am-8:00pm	-	8:00pm-Midnight
Saturday, June 22	6:30am-7:00pm	-	8:00pm-Midnight
Sunday, June 23	6:30am-7:30pm	-	7:30pm-Midnight
Monday, June 24	7:00am-10:30pm	-	10:30pm-Midnight
Tuesday, June 25	7:00am-12:30pm	12:30pm-6:40pm	-

Americans With Disability (ADA):

Q. I'm limited by mobility and need to use a walker or a cane. What is the best way for me to get to the Convention Center from the other side of the river?

A. Please indicate on your registration that you need ADA assistance and someone on staff will reach out to you to assist in accommodating your needs.

Badges:

Q. Will badges be mailed ahead of time for the Convention, or will attendees need to check in at registration?

A. Badges will not be mailed. If you have registered in advance, badges can be printed onsite at self-printing stations.

Each person (including spouses, guests and children) who is officially registered will receive a badge that contains a QR code for access to all events, including those that were purchased individually and for the delegate gift.

Badges must be worn at all events and are required for entry into the Municipal Marketplace.

Q. Where can I print my badge?

A. On Thursday, June 20th starting at 3 pm until 7pm, you will be able to print your badge at the Savannah Convention Center, the Westin Hotel lobby, the Hyatt Regency lobby, and the Marriott Riverfront lobby.

On Friday, June 21st you will be able to print your badge at the Savannah Convention Center and the Westin Hotel. Also, starting at 3 pm until 7 pm, you will again be able to print your badge at the Hyatt Regency lobby and the Marriott Riverfront lobby.

For those attending the Clerks' Conference in the Westin Hotel, a badge printing station will be set up near the meeting space for badge printing.

On Saturday, June 22nd you will be able to print your badge at the Savannah Convention Center and the Westin Hotel. The Marriott Riverfront will have badge printing available at that hotel until 9:30am.

Q. What do I do if I lose my badge?

A. If you lose your badge, you will be able to reprint another badge. See badge printing locations above in the previous question, “Where can I print my badge?”

Billing and Payment:

Q. Can I pay registration fees online with my city credit card or should I send a check?

A. The online registration system will require you to pay for everything online at the time of registration. If you are not able to pay with a credit card, please send your registration form and a check to Georgia Municipal Association, 201 Pryor Street SW, Atlanta, GA 30303. A mailed registration must be accompanied by payment to be processed. We strongly encourage online registration which allows attendees to view, in real time, which classes are currently available.

Cancellations:

Q. I need to cancel a training class for a city official. Instead of losing money can these classes be transferred to another attendee for the GMA 2024 Convention or to another event in the future?

A. You can transfer a registration for a training class to another attendee within your city, but classes / registration fees may not be transferred to another event outside of the 2024 Annual Convention.

Q. What are the cut-off dates to get a full or partial refund if I need to cancel a registration?

A. The cancellation schedule/policy is below:

Prior to May 1st	Full Refund
Between May 2nd and June 1st	80% refund on amount paid
Starting June 2nd	No Refund

City Attorneys’ Session and Brunch

Q. How do I sign up for the City Attorneys’ Session and Brunch?

A. There is a “Special Events” registration option available for those who only want to attend the City Attorneys’ Session and Brunch on Sunday, June 23 starting at 9:00 am.

Conference Registration:

Q. What’s included with my Convention Registration?

A. All general sessions, concurrent sessions, policy committee meetings, rapid fire sessions, district meetings, the annual business meeting and installation of officers. Also included is the closing event, the municipal marketplace and all meal functions taking place within the municipal marketplace.

The awards luncheon IS NOT included in your registration package. Municipal Training Institute classes offered on Friday, Saturday and Tuesday are not part of the registration package for the Convention. You must register for them separately.

And, for those meal functions included with your registration, if you have dietary restrictions and have noted them on your registration, we will make every effort possible to ensure those needs are met. If there is a plated meal function and you require a special meal, please let your server know so that they can accommodate.

Convention Center Questions:

Q. When will the expansion of the Convention Center be completed?

A. The expansion is expected to be completed by the end of 2024. GMA will have use of the full facility beginning with the 2025 Annual Convention.

Q. Is there a LOST and FOUND area?

A. LOST and FOUND will be close to the GMA Registration/Welcome Center area.

Dress Code:

Q. What is the dress code for the Convention?

A. Dress code for the Convention is casual. Make sure you wear comfortable shoes. Also, bring a light sweater or jacket since the Convention Center may be cold inside, even in June.

First Time Attendee:

Q. This will be my first time attending the Annual Convention. What should I do to get the most out of the Convention?

A. You are encouraged to attend the Mentor/Mentee Meet & Greet scheduled for Friday, June 21st from 3:45 pm to 5:00 pm. At this event, attendees will receive an overview of the Convention program and be matched up with experienced city officials who will offer suggestions on how to make the most of programming and networking opportunities.

Food and Beverage Not included with Registration:

Q. Where can I purchase breakfast and/or lunch if it's not covered in my registration for the Convention or the Municipal Training Institute?

A. The Westin Hotel has a restaurant but will experience high volume during peak mealtimes. If you are staying across the river, please try to allow time to eat breakfast or lunch prior to coming over to the Convention Center if those meals are not included in your package for the day. There will be no concession stands open at the Convention Center.

Guests

Q. What is included in the guest registrations:

A. Included in Adult Guest/Child Guest Registration: Municipal Marketplace (opening reception and lunch), General Sessions, and Closing Event.

If you would like to purchase extra tickets to the closing event or Municipal Marketplace that are not associated with a full guest registration, this can be done on-site at the Convention Center in June.

Hotels:

Q. What is the process for making a change to my hotel reservation?

Prior to cutoff, May 20, all reservations changes can be made via a link on the hotel confirmation email or by calling the Savannah Housing Bureau at (912) 644-6465 during business hours of 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (EDT) Monday to Friday.

Once the GMA block closes after May 20, it may take up to one week for hotels to process the reservations in their systems. Please wait until the week of May 27 before contacting hotels directly for any further changes. Phone numbers for hotels in the GMA block are listed below:

Hotels & Telephone Numbers

Courtyard by Marriott	912-790-8287
Doubletree by Hilton	912-790-7000
Embassy Suites	912-330-8222
Hampton Inn (Bay St.)	912-231-9700
Hampton Inn (Oglethorpe St.)	912-721-1600
Hilton Garden Inn	912-721-5000
Holiday Inn Express (Bay St.)	912-231-9000
Holiday Inn Historic District	912-790-1000
Homewood Suites by Hilton	912-355-0025
Hyatt Regency	912-238-1234
JW Marriott	912-373-9100
Marriott Riverfront	912-233-7722
Staybridge	912-721-9000
The Brice	912-238-1200
The Thompson	912-790-1234
Westin Savannah Harbor	912-201-2000

Q. How do I get my tax exemption for the hotel/motel tax for my stay at my hotel?

A. Submit the Hotel/Motel tax exemption form when you check-in at your hotel. Make sure you keep a copy of your completed form.

Q. I didn't get the hotel I wanted. WHY??

A. Hotels in Savannah allow GMA to contract a certain number of rooms at each hotel. Room requests are filled on a first come, first served basis. We recommend frequently checking the GMA housing website for available rooms which open up as attendees cancel and change reservations.

Maps:

Q. How do I walk from the Westin to the Convention Center?

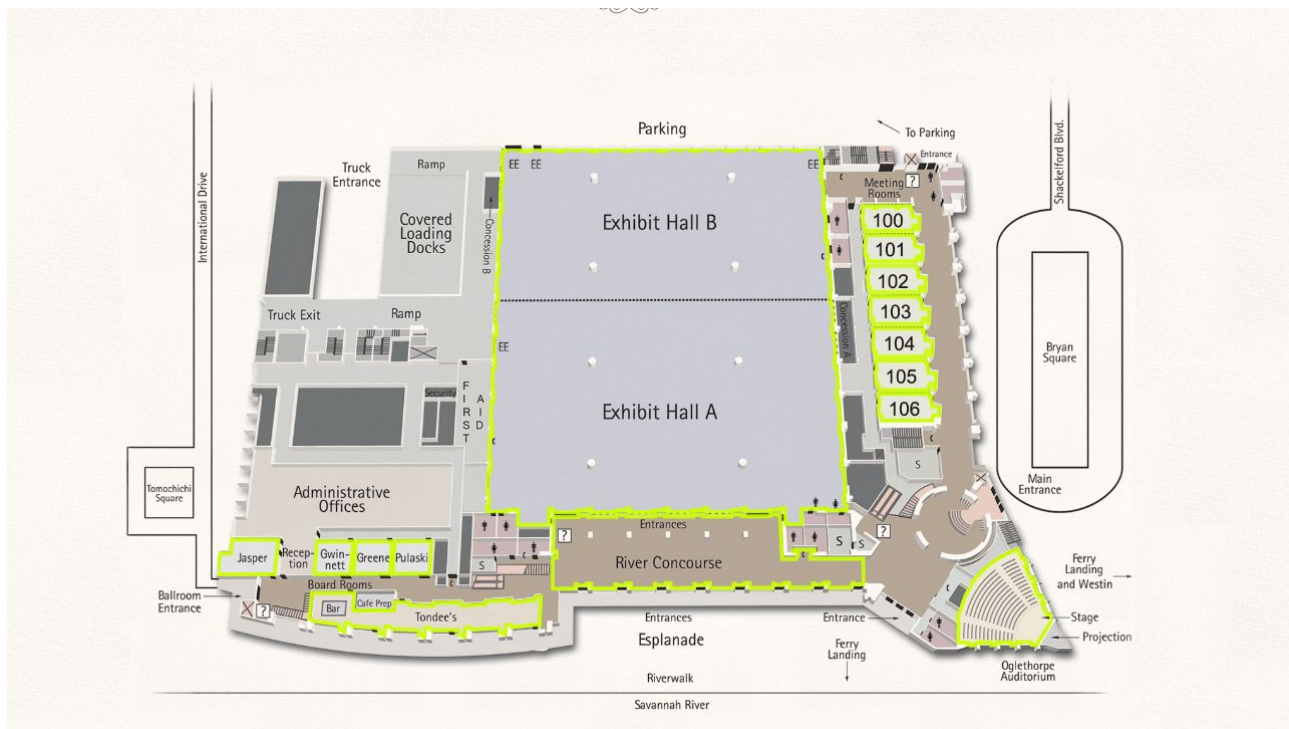
A. The walkway between the Westin Hotel and the Savannah Convention Center will be open for access between the two venues.

Q. Is there a floor plan or map of the Convention Center that I can print out prior to arriving?

A. Yes, here is the URL to the Convention Center <https://www.savconventioncenter.com/> and below are the diagrams for the space:

<https://www.savconventioncenter.com/planners/floor-plans/>

1st Floor:



2nd Floor:



Municipal Marketplace (Exhibit Hall):

Q. What are the Municipal Marketplace hours?

A. The Municipal Marketplace hours for attendees will be Saturday, June 22nd, from 4:00 pm until 6:00 pm; Sunday, June 23rd, from 10:30 am until 2:00 pm.

Q. When can I pick up the **Delegate Gift**?

A. Everyone registered for the full convention receives a delegate gift. To receive your gift, have your badge scanned at the delegate gift counter located in the Municipal Marketplace on Saturday or Sunday.

Q. Is food available in the Municipal Marketplace?

A. Light refreshments and drinks will be served on Saturday during marketplace hours. On Sunday, Coca-Cola products will be served in the back of the marketplace along with a lunch buffet.

Q. Is there an alpha list of all exhibitors that I can reference prior to attending so I can determine who I want to meet with?

A. You can find an alpha list with booth numbers on the GMA mobile app or in the back of the printed program. We encourage attendees to visit the interactive floor plan on the GMA Convention website and plan their visit prior to arriving in Savannah.

Photography Onsite:

Q. I had my picture taken by a GMA photographer. What do they use those photographs for?

A. Please visit GMA's Event Privacy page at [Legal Disclaimer](#) for more information on how GMA uses the information and pictures taken at events.

QR Code on badge:

Q. What is the QR code used for on my badge?

A. For more information regarding the QR code, and what it is used for, please see Event Privacy page at [Legal Disclaimer](#).

Q. Is my contact information on the QR code on my badge?

A. Yes, by scanning your QR code or the QR code of another attendee you will be able to download contact details to your phone, which include the primary registrant's name, title, organization, email and phone number. Please see more information on the QR codes at [Legal Disclaimer](#).

Registration:

Q. I am registered for the conference only and now would like to register for a Municipal Training Institute class. How do I do that?

A. You can log back into your registration via your email confirmation and make modifications to add classes (if available). If you can't find your email confirmation, you should be able to search via the subject line by typing in Registration Confirmed – 2024 Annual Convention. Once you find that email you can click on the link to modify your registration.

Q. I am currently "waitlisted" for a particular Municipal Training Institute class. What is the process for notification that a seat has opened up for me in the class?

A. If a seat opens up in a waitlisted class, the GMA registration team will receive notification and will contact the member and/or clerk to finalize class change. You will need to respond to the GMA team within 2 business days of the contact date. After which, the next person on the waitlist will be contacted.

Q. Why can't I add myself to the waitlist?

A. More than likely that class's waitlist is full. You can continue to check back to see if you can add it at a later date.

To go back in --- You can log back into the registration via the email confirmation and make modifications to the registration type and/or to add classes (if available) or remove or add to waitlist. If you can't find your email confirmation, you should be able to search via the subject line by typing in Registration Confirmed – 2024 Annual Convention. Once you find that email

you can click on the link to modify your registration. You should be able to add to a waitlist without having to pick another class at that same time.

Q. Do I need to pick another class in a timeframe that I am on a waitlist?

A. You can add yourself to a waitlist for a class and should not have to choose another class within that same time period.

Q. I need to register two people for one of the Municipal Training Institute classes. How do I do that?

A. You will need to register people individually using your Registration ID number. Once you have gone through the registration process for that individual and before you go to payment you will see a button at the end that says "Register others/guests" --- click there to register another individual. This can be repeated until you are finished registering your city attendees. Once you are done you can continue to payment and will be billed for all those you registered.

Sponsors:

Q. How do I become a sponsor with GMA?

A. GMA's [Business Alliance Program](#) offers an array of ways for your organization to engage with the city officials of GMA's [member cities](#). Three levels of participation provide your business the opportunity to efficiently market to the largest municipal audience in Georgia. Click [here](#) to go to the sponsorship informational page on the Georgia Municipal Association's website.

Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute:

Q. Where can I access presentation slides or other class materials that are available from the Municipal Training Institute classes I am registered for?

A. Generally, any presentation slides and other class materials that the instructor is making available for training institute classes, can be found approximately ten days in advance of the class on the GMA website at: [Class Presentations](#) as well on the GMA mobile app. Details about accessing the mobile app will be added to this document at a later date.

Q. What classes should I take to earn training certificates through the Holtz Municipal Training Institute or earn certification through the Georgia Clerks Education Institute?

A. If you would like guidance for earning training certificates through the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute, please contact Aileen Harris of the GMA staff at [this link](#).

If you are seeking guidance on earning certification through the Georgia Clerks Education Institute, please contact Christina Collins with the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at 706.542.4240.

Q. How do I access a Municipal Training Institute transcript?

A. If you're in need of accessing training transcripts for yourself or others, simply log-in to the GMA website here: [GMA Login](#). Once you've logged in, that link will change into a menu of links. If you are a municipal elected official or city manager / assistant city manager who has completed training institute classes in the past, you can look up your own transcripts from the

menu. If you're a city clerk or other authorized city employee, you may access training institute transcripts of others for your city with the "View Other Transcripts" link in that same menu.

Q. Where are Municipal Training Institute classes being held in 2024? And how will I know where my class is being held?

A. Municipal Training Institute classes will be held at the Convention Center, at the Marriott Riverfront hotel, and at the Westin hotel. The class locations will be published in the electronic version of the Convention program sent out in advance of the event and posted on the GMA website, on the GMA mobile app and in the printed program available onsite. It is very important that you identify the location of your class well in advance of the class start time so that you can plan accordingly to be to class on time. Note that the Marriott Riverfront hotel is located in downtown Savannah, across the river from the Convention Center and Westin hotel. Details about accessing the mobile app will be added to this document at a later date.

Q. Am I allowed to film or record a Municipal Training Institute class?

A. Participants must not record, live stream, or otherwise transmit video or sound from any training session without express written permission from the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government Public Service Training and Leadership Faculty and the GMA Deputy Director of Training. Participants acknowledge that any such materials, should such permission be granted, will be the exclusive intellectual property of the Carl Vinson Institute of Government or GMA, as appropriate. Any person who records, streams, or transmits material without obtaining such written permission shall be immediately asked to leave the training session and will forfeit any paid fee without obtaining training credits. The name, likeness, voice, and/or appearance of any participant or presenter will not and shall not be utilized by any party to create new works via artificial intelligence without express permission.

Q. Can I add a class onsite? How do I do that?

A. Yes, you may register for classes onsite based on classroom space availability. To register onsite or to inquire about class availability, please visit the registration desk at the Convention Center.

Q. How do I get credit for a Municipal Training Institute class that I attended?

A. To receive training credit through the Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute, a participant must attend the entire class. For six-hour classes, anyone arriving more than 30 minutes after the class begins, leaving class repeatedly, or leaving the class early will not receive credit. For three-hour classes, anyone arriving more than 15 minutes after the class begins, leaving class repeatedly or leaving class early will not receive credit. Class completion forms must be signed by the participant and the instructor and provided to the instructor at the end of the class. Class instructors will not sign class completion forms in the event the attendance criteria cited herein is not met by the participant. To receive credit, the registration fee must be paid in full. **Please be mindful of the Training Institute's attendance policy.**

Q. Am I able to attend Convention sessions and events if I only sign up and pay for Municipal Training Institute classes?

A. No. To attend any Convention session or event, to include general sessions, concurrent sessions, rapid fire sessions, policy committee meetings, the Municipal Marketplace

and closing event, you will need to register for the Convention separately from your training classes. Note that the awards luncheon requires a separate ticket that is not included in the Convention registration package.

Please note that "Training Only" registration is specifically intended for participants solely attending training classes without engaging in other conference activities. We don't offer individual add-ons for training-only registrations, particularly because our convention-related offerings are reserved for full conference registrants. On-site, we do offer additional exhibit hall passes. However, these are intended for guests accompanying full conference registrants who aren't participating in the conference or its full guest registration perks (such as general sessions, closing events, etc.). GMA highly recommends considering full conference registration to fully capitalize on the educational and networking opportunities we put together for a rewarding experience.

Q. What meals are included with my Municipal Training Institute class?

A. Six-hour classes include the following: breakfast, lunch and afternoon refreshment break.

A. Three-hour classes include the following: Friday morning classes include breakfast; Friday afternoon classes include refreshment break; Saturday and Tuesday classes include breakfast.

What are some of the Highlights of the Week:

- **Harold F. Holtz Municipal Training Institute classes** will be held on Friday, Saturday and Tuesday and require separate registration and registration fee.
- **The Parade of Flags** will take place on Sunday Morning during the Opening General Session. Each city represented at the Convention is invited to participate in the Parade of Flags by doing the following: Be sure to bring to Savannah your city flag AND flagpole holder for the Parade of Flags. The flags will need to be set up outside of the Chatham Ballroom starting on Friday morning. Someone from your city will need to carry the flag in the parade. On Sunday morning prior to the Opening Session, those presenting flags should plan to arrive early to the area outside of the Chatham Ballroom to begin lining up. Note that flags must be picked up prior to the end of the Convention on Monday.
- **The adoption of GMA's 2025 legislative policies and the election of the officers and board** will take place during the Business Meeting on Sunday afternoon. Your city will need to select a delegate who will vote on your city's behalf, but all attendees are encouraged to attend the Business Meeting, not just the voting delegate.
- **The Awards Luncheon** will be held on Monday. The luncheon requires a separate ticket that is not included in your Convention registration.

FINAL NOTE: When in doubt, ask a GMA staff member.

6/3/2024-updated