

Georgia's Brunswick port expands ro/ro capacity

Latest project follows recent acreage paving

[Stuart Chirls](#)

Thursday, October 10, 2024



Three ro/ro vessels are shown at Colonel's Island Terminal, Port of Brunswick, Ga. (Photo: Georgia Ports Authority)

So what's a port to do after it adds 120 paved acres to support its growing roll-on/roll-off (ro/ro) vehicle business?

That's easy. If you're the Port of Brunswick, Georgia, you add 50 more acres.

The Georgia Ports Authority Board approved the measure for expansion of more vehicle storage at Brunswick, a move that will enable the authority to more efficiently accommodate increased trade crossing the docks at Colonel's Island Terminal.

"The combination of space to grow, global and domestic reach, and quality of service make the Port of Brunswick the nation's premier gateway for ro/ro trade," said Griff Lynch, Georgia Ports Authority president and chief executive, in a release. "With the significant infrastructure investments we're making at the nation's largest auto port, GPA is prepared to handle future growth from new and existing customers. This move comes in response to requests from auto manufacturers seeking to expand their cargo volumes through Georgia."

Hyundai, Kia, Mercedes-Benz and a number of automotive components makers have production facilities in Georgia. Mercedes-Benz operates an auto processing terminal at Brunswick.

The expanded auto processing capacity approved at the GPA's meeting Sept. 24 will go online in the summer of 2025 and follows the recent addition of more than 120 like acres, part of \$262 million in capacity enhancements for auto storage and warehousing recently added at Colonel's Island.

Brunswick has more than 200 additional acres for expansion when the time comes to scale up.

Colonel's Island Terminal handled more than 870,000 units of ro/ro cargo in fiscal 2024, which ended in June. That would put it ahead of the Port of Baltimore, which handled 847,000 cars and trucks on 710 acres in 2023.

At the same time, Brunswick will receive nearly \$38 million in federal funding for maintenance dredging and harbor improvements in legislation passed by Congress earlier this year. That includes \$26.6 million to return the federal waterway to its full authorized depth. Dredging work by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is expected to start in late 2024.

An additional \$11.35 million in federal funding and \$6 million in state money have been allocated to the Corps' Brunswick Harbor Improvements project. The plan includes an expanded area for vessels to pass, a bend widener and an expanded turning basin for ships docking at Colonel's Island.

In August, Georgia's Brunswick and Savannah handled 74,630 units of ro/ro cargo, an increase of 21.4%, or 13,175 units, compared to the same month a year ago.