



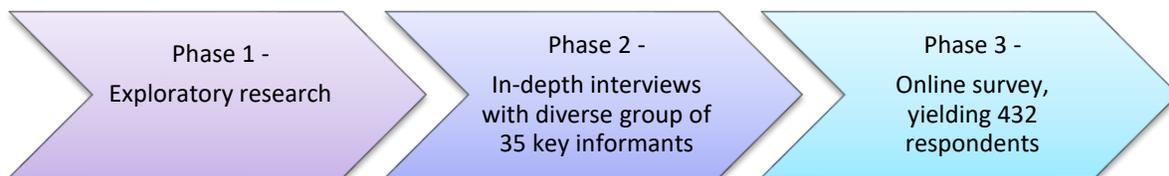
## Savannah Jewish Federation

### 2021 Savannah Jewish Community Strategic Task Force – Executive Summary

For 78 years, the Savannah Jewish Federation has been the center of the Jewish community in Savannah Georgia and the South Carolina Low Country. Today the Federation serves a Jewish population of about 4,000.

Seeking to strengthen its programming and structure in order to better serve its community, the Federation recently undertook a community study. The goals of this study are (1) to gain an understanding of the perceptions and concerns of the community about the Savannah Jewish Federation and JEA; and (2) to provide key data to Federation as it launches a strategic planning process to develop a roadmap for the next 3 – 5 years.

The study consisted of three phases:



### Summary Survey Findings

We conducted a large-scale online survey, which captured 432 responses, representing approximately 11% of the estimated Jewish population of Savannah. This was an opt-in blind, anonymous survey. The findings provide insights into the perceptions of the community.

Characteristics of the respondents include the following:

- All participants are 18+ years old.
- 62% of the respondents are female.
- Respondents skew older slightly more than half aged 65+.
- 73% have no children at home.
- Almost one-quarter were born and raised in Savannah, and 61% moved to Savannah as adults.
- Overall, respondents are highly engaged in the Jewish community, with 78% belonging to a synagogue and 53% being members of the JEA.
- Almost 70% often or sometimes attend Jewish programs.
- While almost 8 out of 10 respondents are very concerned about antisemitism in the United States, there is less concern about antisemitism in Greater Savannah (45%).
- 80% of all respondents feel very or somewhat attached to Israel. Those over the age of 55 are more likely to feel a strong attachment to Israel than those under 55.

## Programs

There is a significant support (80%+) for all adult programs, such as:

- Yom HaShoah program
- Jewish Family Service
- Speakers and educational programs
- Community Relations Committee
- Israel advocacy
- Jewish Film Festival
- Fitness / Health and Wellness / Pool
- Community holiday celebrations
- Yom Ha'atzmaut / Israel Independence Day
- Food for Thought luncheon series

Similarly, there is significant support (80%) for programs for young families and children/youth, including:

- Summer camp
- Preschool
- After-school programs
- Community holiday celebrations
- Sports Leagues and activities for kids
- PJ Library
- BBYO

Respondents suggest that offerings be expanded and improved by increasing programs for adults / seniors and offering more Jewish programming. It was suggested that Federation and synagogues collaborate on community programs, which would maximize the relatively limited resources available in the community.

## Perception of Federation

The perception of Federation is generally strong in Savannah. More than two-thirds of respondents have donated to the Federation in the past 24 months. Respondents perceive that Federation adds value in the community in multiple ways: as a fundraiser, grant-maker, and as an entity conducting outreach, creating connections locally and globally, and fostering cohesiveness in the community.

## Leadership and Volunteerism

Half of respondents volunteered in a leadership capacity in Jewish or secular organizations in Greater Savannah in the last 3 – 5 years. Those under 55 were just as likely to have served on a Board or committee as those over 55. Respondents most often volunteered at their synagogue (60%), Federation (43%), and JEA (43%).