

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

2020

GAINESVILLE-HALL COUNTY GEORGIA USA

A vibrant and growing, solid and diverse community located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Surrounded by beautiful Lake Sidney Lanier, the area offers an unparalleled quality of life and a sound economic base for business and industry. Gainesville-Hall County is home to more than 300 manufacturing and processing concerns, and 50 international company locations representing 15 foreign countries.

Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce

Gainesville-Hall County Economic Development Council
www.greaterhallchamber.com



Pictured: Construction is set to begin in spring 2020 on Gainesville Renaissance, a mixed-use development to be located on the “Fourth Side of the Square” in Downtown Gainesville. The project includes 8 condos, 15,000 sq. ft. of retail space, 15,000 sq. ft. of office space and the pocket park pictured above.

BUSINESS

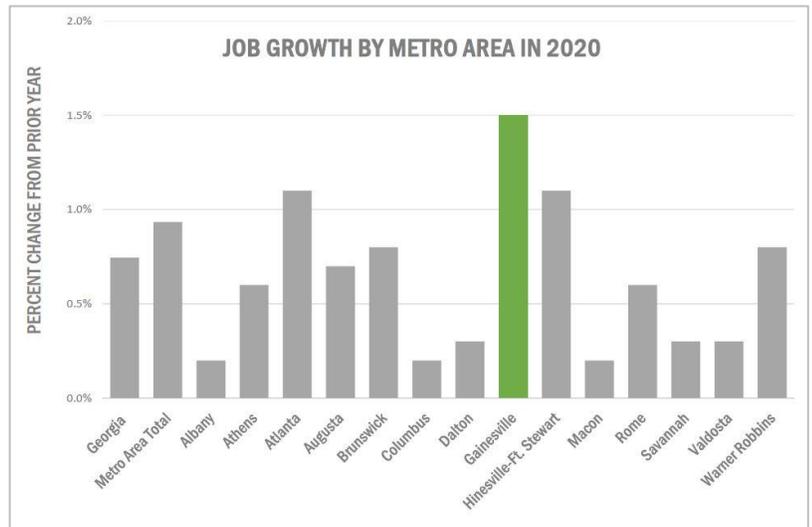
The 2019 year-end summary included 14 new and expanded businesses in Gainesville-Hall County adding 1,024 jobs and \$292 million in capital investment. Since 2015, 105 new and expanded businesses have announced 5,278 jobs and \$1.28 billion in capital investment.

- The 2020 Milken Institute Report named the Gainesville-Hall County Metro Area as the Top Small Metro Area in Georgia and #8 in the Nation for Best-Performing Small Metros.
- Firms expanding their North American business include ALBAform, American Yazaki Corporation, Boehringer Ingelheim, Geveko Markings, Marel, Mars Wrigley Confectionary, Syfan Logistics and Testrite.
- *Site Selection Magazine* named Gainesville-Hall County one of the top performing small metro areas in Georgia for 2018 and 2019. The U.S. *Site Selection Magazine* also named Georgia the #1 State for Business for the seventh year in a row. *Area Development* and CNBC also rated Georgia top in the nation for new business and expansion.
- Fox Factory Holding Corp, an industry leader in the design and development of high performance shock absorbers and racing suspension products, will create up to 800 jobs and invest more than \$47 million in a new manufacturing headquarters in Gainesville-Hall County.
- Mars Wrigley Confectionary has added 126 new jobs and \$62 million in new equipment at their Hall County facility, making it the largest fully integrated chewing gum manufacturer in the world. This facility employs over 1,000 people.
- Alfrex, a Korean manufacturer of fireproof exterior panels, is investing \$6.2 million to create 30 new jobs at the company's new North American headquarters, sales and manufacturing facility in McCraney Property Company's 985 Lanier Logistics Center in South Hall.
- VDL Groep, a Dutch manufacturer, located in Oakwood South Business Park, invested \$17 million and is creating 110 jobs at their new facility in Hall County.
- Elastron, a Turkish manufacturer, opened its North American headquarters in Gainesville. The company, which produces thermoplastic elastomers, invested \$10 million in Gainesville-Hall County and created an initial 25 jobs.
- Geveko Markings, a Swedish manufacturer, completed their 80,000 sq. ft. North American headquarters and manufacturing facility in Gainesville Business Park. The company produces TPE road and pavement markings and will employ 75 people at the new facility.
- Auto Metal Direct built a 318,000 sq. ft. facility in Gateway Industrial Centre. The building serves as their corporate headquarters and fulfillment center.
- Carroll Daniel Construction completed their new, 50,000 sq. ft. headquarters in downtown Gainesville in fall 2019. The \$12 million, multistory headquarters includes an additional 10,000 sq. ft. of retail space.
- A 520-acre expansion has been proposed for the successful Gateway Industrial Centre off Highway 365 in Hall County. As part of the expansion, Kubota has announced plans for a new, 300-acre Engineering/Research and Development center.
- The City of Gainesville is working toward a new, 1300-acre business park located between Athens Highway and Candler Road. The Gainesville 85 Business Park will include water features and walking trails.
- Gainesville-Hall County companies, including Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health, Recro Pharma, the Georgia Poultry Laboratory Network, Atlanta Biologicals, Apotheica, Inc. and Theragenics are among the top life science firms in Hall County.



Fox Factory's new, 320,000 sq. ft. manufacturing headquarters is currently under construction in Gainesville Industrial Park West. The building is being completed in phases and will be finished in August 2020.

- Pattillo Industrial Real Estate developed a 300,000 sq. ft. speculative building in the 250-acre Oakwood South Industrial Park and has announced plans to develop another building in Flowery Branch. Pattillo Industrial Real Estate, The Adams Companies, Radial Property Group, IDI, McCraney Property Company, Taylor & Mathis and Prologis have recently built or are building speculative buildings for new and expanding industries in the area.
- The Business Incubator at Brenau University is a public-private partnership. Forty-eight businesses have launched from the program creating more than 1,100 jobs. The Business Incubator’s client companies have developed 21 patents, 11 copyrights and 21 trademarks.
- According to the Georgia Department of Labor, 4,600 business establishments represented Gainesville-Hall County employment in 2019. Ninety-nine percent of businesses are categorized as small, using the SBA’s definition of fewer than 500 employees. Ninety-three percent employ fewer than 50 people.
- Thirty-four small business owners earned the Greater Hall Chamber’s “Certified Small Business Partner” designation in 2019. Each “Certified Small Business Partner” participated in at least six Small Business Success Seminars.
- According to a new logistics study, Gainesville-Hall County has a growing cluster of 76 logistics firms that employ over 4,800 and provide freight brokerage, 3PL, cold-chain logistics and transportation services.



Dr. Jeffrey Humphreys, Director of the Selig Center for Economic Growth at the University of Georgia, predicted a 1.5% increase in job growth for Gainesville-Hall County in 2020 making it the #1 Metro Area in Georgia for job growth in 2020.

POPULATION & HOUSING

Gainesville-Hall County issued more than 1,100 new, single-family home permits in 2019.

- Gainesville-Hall County’s population grew by 12.5% from 2010-2019. The population of Gainesville-Hall County was 202,148 in 2019 and is expected to grow to 245,000 by 2030. The U.S. Census Bureau identified Gainesville-Hall County MSA among the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the United States.
- In 2019, Hall County governments issued 1,116 new, single-family home permits. Gainesville processed 255 permits, while Flowery Branch processed 259. Unincorporated Hall County issued 557 permits and Oakwood processed 45.
- The average single-family home sale price in Gainesville-Hall County in 2019 was \$291,026 up 3.8% from 2018. The number of single-family home sales in Gainesville-Hall County was 2,634 in 2019 compared to 2,438 homes sold in 2018.
- Housing developments such as Sterling on the Lake (1,007 acres in Flowery Branch), Marina Bay on Lake Lanier (385 acres in North Hall), Reunion (550 acres in Braselton) and Mundy Mill (400 acres in South Hall) offer master-planned communities with amenities.
- High-quality retirement developments are thriving in Hall County. Ashton Senior Living Personal Home Care is a 65-unit development in Gainesville. BeeHive Homes is a 19-suite personal care home. The Lanier Lodge overlooking beautiful Lake Lanier at Thompson Bridge Road has 90 units, including 20 assisted living units.
- In 2018, *Where to Retire* selected Gainesville-Hall County as a top retirement destination in the sixth edition of “America’s 100 Best Places to Retire,” a comprehensive guidebook of the country’s most appealing retirement towns. In addition, Gainesville-Hall County was listed as one of ten “Best Lake Towns.”
- Cresswind at Lake Lanier, a 410-acre retirement development on the shores of Lake Lanier, claimed the title “50+ Housing Community of the Year” from the Greater Atlanta Home Builders Association. Other growing retirement developments include Del Webb at Chateau Elan, Village at Deaton Creek by Del Webb, The Holbrook, Lanier Village Estates and Myrtle Terraces.

- Gainesville Renaissance is a mixed-use development planned for the “Fourth Side of the Square” in Downtown Gainesville. The project will include 8 condominiums, 15,000 sq. ft. of retail space, 15,000 sq. ft. of office space and a pocket park. Construction is set to begin in spring 2020.
- The City of Gainesville announced plans to develop the City View Lot and Midtown City Block. Atlanta-based Terwilliger Pappas has proposed a project known as Solis Gainesville, which will include retail and restaurant space, as well as apartments.
- Walton Summit is a 250-unit complex near Downtown Gainesville. The development consists of public housing, affordable housing and market-rate housing. Lake Shadow Condos, a 52-unit development, is located near Limestone Parkway in Gainesville.
- Phase I of the 53 West Luxury Apartments, located across from the entrance to the Mundy Mill development, includes 266 apartments. Phase II of 53 West will include 194 units and is scheduled to open in 2020.
- The Mill at New Holland is a new, 248-unit complex located behind the Kroger Marketplace off Jesse Jewell Parkway in Gainesville. Units are now available for lease.
- The Residential Group (TRG) is developing a 324-unit apartment complex off Phil Niekro Boulevard near I-985 in Flowery Branch. The development will also include five retail and restaurant outparcels. A separate 334-unit apartment complex is being developed on 32.6 acres near Flowery Branch High School.
- The historic New Holland United Methodist Church was converted to New Holland Studios, a nine-unit apartment complex with rent starting around \$800 per month.
- University Commons in Oakwood is a new 23-unit development consisting of three-bedroom cottages on Frontage Road. Another development for a 152-unit complex of 1, 2, and 3 bedroom apartments has been approved on Atlanta Highway. Both developments are positioned to serve as student housing for the University of North Georgia Gainesville campus.
- Oakwood has also approved four separate developments including over 400 townhomes and three mixed-use and single-family developments with more than 570 housing units.
- East Main I and East Main II are currently under development in Flowery Branch for 55 and 97 single-family units, respectively, on East Main Street. Flowery Branch also has a 67-unit, single-family home project known as Park Haven in development and a 129-unit, single-family project known as Park Walk in phase two.
- Annexation and zoning was approved for a 375-home subdivision on 220 acres between Gillsville Highway and Gaines Mill Road. The property owner is continuing to work with several developers to bring this project to fruition.

RETAIL

Gainesville-Hall County has a primary trade area that serves over 650,000 people in Northeast Georgia and is the region’s only major retail center.

- Dawsonville Highway 53 continues to be a successful retail corridor with over 1.7 million sq. ft. of retail space. The Thurmon Tanner Parkway extension and the highly successful, 500,000 sq. ft. Stonebridge Village Center, located in South Hall, are also generating retail interest along the I-985 corridor.
- New Holland, located at Exit 24 in Gainesville, has developed retail that includes a Kroger Marketplace, Beverly’s Ace Hardware, Chick-Fil-A, Taco Bell, Senor Fiesta, Mr. Teriyaki, Shane’s Rib Shack, AutoZone, Verizon, Wilson Orthodontics, Hulsey Dentistry, Zaxby’s, Wells Fargo, Huddle House, Cricket Wireless and McDonald’s.



Gainesville’s Downtown Square has Main Street USA designation and offers unique dining and shopping experiences

- Downtown Gainesville is vibrant. New developments will add additional restaurant and retail space to the urban center.
- Census data indicates Gainesville-Hall County has a primary trade area that serves over 1,000,000 Northeast Georgia residents and is the region's only major retail center, offering Lakeshore Mall, Super Target, Sam's Club, Best Buy, Belk, Michaels, Jo-Ann Fabrics, PetSmart, Office Max, Kohl's, Dick's Sporting Goods, a full spectrum of popular automobile brand dealers and more.

HEALTHCARE

Through Northeast Georgia Health System, Longstreet Clinic, Northeast Georgia Diagnostic Clinic, Good News Clinic and others, residents in Gainesville-Hall County have access to nationally recognized health care in a variety of specialties right at home.

- According to a recent healthcare study, Gainesville-Hall County is home to 460 healthcare service providers employing over 13,250 people, or approximately 15% of the Hall County workforce. Nearly 80% of Hall County's healthcare employment is concentrated in the City of Gainesville, the region's healthcare epicenter.
- Led by volunteer boards made up of community leaders, Northeast Georgia Health System (NGHS) is a not-for-profit health system that completed nearly 1.5 million patient visits in 2019 across a variety of locations:
 - Four Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) campuses in Gainesville, Braselton, Barrow County and Lumpkin County
 - More than 65 Northeast Georgia Physicians Group (NGPG) locations
 - More than a dozen locations of The Heart Center of NGMC
 - Dozens of outpatient locations
- Northeast Georgia Medical Center has been recognized in recent years as Georgia's #1 Hospital for overall hospital care, overall surgical care, heart care, orthopedic surgery, women's care and more. NGMC joined the Winship Cancer Network as an affiliate of the Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University and has also been ranked in the top 6% in the nation for cancer care by CareChex. In addition, NGMC was the recipient of the 2018 Outstanding Achievement Award for cancer services.
- More than 1,200 providers are a part of the medical staff at NGMC, and NGHS currently employs more than 8,800 people throughout the region.
- Northeast Georgia Medical Center has now surpassed the \$1.8 billion mark in local and state economic impact.
- NGMC's Graduate Medical Education (GME) program welcomed their first 26 residents in 2019. The program plans to expand to as many as 178 residents across six specialties – general surgery, internal medicine, family medicine, emergency medicine, OB/GYN and psychiatry – by 2023. The GME program is expected to drive more than \$66 million into Hall County's economy from 2019 to 2023 – and an additional \$18 million in local economic impact for each year after.
- Three physician groups based in Hall County – Longstreet Clinic, Northeast Georgia Physicians Group and Northeast Georgia Diagnostic Clinic – continue to add new physicians and services and are each listed in Atlanta's "Top 25 Physician Group Practices" by the *Atlanta Business Chronicle*.
- Longstreet Clinic had more than 475,000 patient visits at 11 office locations across Northeast Georgia in 2019. The independent, physician-owned medical group has more than 200 Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers across 18 medical specialties and employs more than 750 individuals. Longstreet Clinic occupies over 150,000 sq. ft. of medical office space across the region and has an annual budget of over \$125 million.



Northeast Georgia Health System's Medical Park 2 is currently under construction. The 72,000 sq. ft. medical office building will open along Jesse Jewell Parkway in July 2020 and will be home to the Graduate Medical Education (GME) program, several NGPG practices and a new retail pharmacy.

- Good News Clinics is a Christian, nonprofit healthcare center that provides free medical and dental services to low-income, uninsured residents of Hall County. With 42 physician volunteers and 43 dentist volunteers, the clinic serves over 3,500 people each year and is committed to improving access to care and reducing hospital admissions by managing chronic diseases.
- Emory Healthcare is constructing a 29,000 sq. ft. musculoskeletal and sports medicine clinic at IBM Performance Fields in Flowery Branch, home of the Atlanta Falcons. The new facility will open in fall 2020 and will provide services to both local residents and athletes as well as Falcons players.

REDEVELOPMENT

Gainesville’s Downtown is a central business district for 40,000 city residents and an estimated 150,000 commuters who work and shop in town.

- Plans are underway to develop the “Fourth Side of the Square” in Downtown Gainesville. The mixed-use project, known as Gainesville Renaissance, will include 8 condominiums, 15,000 sq. ft. of retail space, 15,000 sq. ft. of office space and a pocket park. Construction is set to begin in spring 2020.
- Atlanta-based Terwilliger Pappas has purchased the City View Lot (6.8 acres) with plans to invest approximately \$44 million into a mixed-use development. The project, known as Solis Gainesville, will include 10,000 sq. ft. of retail and restaurant space and 220-market rate apartments. Terwilliger Pappas also plans to purchase the Midtown City Block and build an additional 5,000 sq. ft. of retail space and 170 apartments in Downtown Gainesville.
- Capstone Property Group purchased the iconic 111 Green Street Building located in Downtown Gainesville with plans to develop an upscale, 50-room boutique hotel. Regions Bank formerly occupied the building.
- Street-scaping improvements and a second phase of the Midtown Greenway will connect Downtown Gainesville and Lake Lanier to the University of North Georgia Gainesville Campus and Elachee Nature Science Center via the Highlands to Islands Trail and the Rock Creek Greenways.
- The cities of Flowery Branch and Oakwood are redeveloping their downtown areas. The City of Lula completed a downtown beautification effort punctuated by the completed Veterans Park and fully renovated train depot.



Carroll Daniel Construction completed its new, 50,000 sq. ft. headquarters in downtown Gainesville in fall 2019. The company occupies the top three levels of the building, while the bottom level features 10,000 sq. ft. of retail space.

- The Residential Group (TRG) is currently developing a mixed-use project in downtown Flowery Branch, which includes 13 apartments and 7,000 sq. ft. of retail and restaurant space. Following the completion of the project in October 2020, The Residential Group will develop two parks – one of which will include a farmer’s market – and focus on streetscaping the downtown area. The Residential Group project is the cornerstone of Flowery Branch’s redevelopment efforts.
- Left Nut Brewing Company, a microbrewery, has tours and tastings in Gainesville’s Chicopee Mill. Two growler shops and a wine bar have opened in Gainesville, and one growler shop opened in Flowery Branch.
- Downtown Gainesville Redevelopment Tools: Federal Opportunity Zone, State Opportunity Zone, Tax Allocation District, USDA Business and Industry Loans, New Market Tax Credits, Less Developed Census Tract, and Historic Preservation Tax Credit.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Lake Lanier provides drinking water for 65% of Georgians.

- The Northeast Georgia Inland Port, Georgia’s second inland terminal, will be developed on 104 acres in the Gateway Industrial Centre near Highway 365. Set to open in 2023, the new inland port will be operated by the Georgia Ports Authority and served by Norfolk Southern.
- Sewer for Highway 365 North is under development with funding support from the infrastructure Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST).
- The Savannah Harbor Expansion Project to deepen the commerce route to 47 feet will be completed by 2022. The effect will be lower shipping costs and transport times for many Hall County industries that utilize Georgia’s ports.
- Gainesville’s Lee Gilmer Airport has an updated terminal building and can accommodate aircraft up to 100,000 pounds, with two runways at 4,000 and 5,500 feet, an Instrument Landing System (ILS), and 93 hangars.
- The City of Lula has developed a new, 1,500 ft. trail expansion to its Lula Wellness Park near Athens Street in downtown Lula.
- Gainesville has started work on several beautification projects including streetscape improvements, signage, upgraded crosswalks and the greening of the pedestrian “moat” in downtown.
- Renovations are underway for the Hall County Library – Gainesville Branch. The project is funded by a state grant, SPLOST and impact fees. The library is set to reopen late summer 2020.
- The newly completed Exit 14 interchange, known as the “Atlanta Falcons Training Facility Interchange,” is located between Flowery Branch and Oakwood in South Hall County and offers new access for commercial developments.
- SPLOST VIII was approved by a 70% margin of Hall County voters in November 2019 and will go into effect on July 1, 2020. Revenues are projected to exceed \$216 million and will be used to fund several capital outlay projects including a new parking deck in downtown Gainesville, a new library in East Hall and expansions to trails and greenspace throughout the county.



Senator Butch Miller and Representative Emory Dunahoo, Jr. unveiled the Exit 14 “Atlanta Falcons Training Facility Interchange” in fall 2019.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Lanier Technical College reached the highest enrollment numbers in its 55-year history with 4,723 students enrolled for spring 2020. Graduates enjoy a 100% job placement rate.

- Three Gainesville-Hall County higher education institutions – Brenau University, University of North Georgia – Gainesville (UNG) and Lanier Technical College – enroll more than 16,000 students.
- Lanier Technical College relocated its main campus to a 95-acre site on Georgia Highway 365. The \$135 million state-of-the-art campus opened for classes in 2019. The campus has 335,000 sq. ft. of teaching space, which will accommodate 5,000 students.
- Lanier Technical College continues to focus on workforce development. A German-style apprenticeship program partnership combining class time and on the job training (OJT) in the fields of Mechatronics, Industrial Maintenance and Machining started in 2019. The workforce development program has expanded to 20 small businesses through the Appalachian Regional Commission grant and is a pilot program for the Technical College System of Georgia that may be expanded across the state.

- Lanier Technical College reached the highest enrollment numbers in its 55-year history with 4,723 students enrolled for the spring 2020 semester. Graduates enjoy a 100% job placement rate.
- Lanier Technical College was voted the #1 Technical College in Georgia by *JAMES Magazine*.
- Lanier Technical College offers 155 programs of study including seven programs added at the new campus: Carpentry Technology, Commercial Truck Driving, Construction Management, Culinary Arts, Diesel Equipment Technology, Hospitality Management and Marine Engine Technology.
- Lanier Technical College offers 16 tuition-free programs to support high demand careers throughout North Georgia. Over 40% of LTC graduates enter the medical field, with programs including dental hygiene, radiologic technology, paramedicine and nursing.



Lanier Technical College – Gainesville Campus

- Brenau University has more than 3,600 students from 43 states and 18 countries. The Graduate School Program continues to grow with more than 1,400 masters and doctoral students. Currently, Brenau offers four doctoral programs: Doctor of Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy Doctorate, Doctor of Nursing Practice and Doctor of Education.
- Brenau also contributes \$150 million in direct, measurable economic impact with an annual operating budget of \$50 million and \$20 million in payroll for 450 full-time employees.
- The University of North Georgia (UNG) has nearly 20,000 students across five campuses and online; while about 83 percent of those students come from 30 counties in Northeast Georgia, UNG enrolls students from 47 states, 2 U.S. territories and 83 countries.



Brenau University – Gainesville Campus

- UNG’s Gainesville Campus has approximately 8,000 students and offers 40 bachelor’s degree programs, associate degrees with nearly 40 programs of study, 7 graduate degree programs and 16 certificate programs.
- The University of North Georgia is currently renovating the former Lanier Technical College campus in Oakwood with renovations set to be complete in 2021. Acquiring the seven buildings totaling 165,000 sq. ft. for instructional and institutional space is a welcome addition to the growing student population and expanding programs for UNG’s Gainesville campus. The renovations will allow program expansion in communication, media and journalism; nursing; the Lewis F. Rogers Institute for Environmental and Spatial Analysis (IESA); Professional and Continuing Education (PCE); and visual arts.
- More than 36,000 students in grades K-12 are enrolled in the Hall County and Gainesville City School Systems. The rigorous and globally recognized International Baccalaureate (IB) Program is available at three schools. Welding is also taught at three schools as a part of the manufacturing pathway.
- The Gainesville City School System recently celebrated the opening of a new student center, known as The Hub, located at Gainesville High School. The Hub is a one-stop-shop that serves the needs of students and families in Gainesville and Hall County in areas such as academic and workforce guidance, mental and behavioral health and basic, daily necessities.
- Gainesville City’s elementary schools offer specialized areas of learning tailored to students’ academic needs including standards-based curriculum; virtual, blended and expanded learning opportunities; after-school clubs and programs; and school of choice options for parents.
- Gainesville High School (GHS) is recognized as a 2020 AP (Advanced Placement) STEM, AP STEM Achievement and AP Access and Support School. Seventeen Advanced Placement courses including the AP Capstone Diploma are offered at GHS providing rigorous, college-level instruction with equity of access to all students. Over 70% of GHS AP students scored a 3 or higher on AP exams.

- Gainesville City Schools and Hall County Schools also offer Dual Enrollment and Work-Based Learning Internships in partnership with local manufacturers and processors. These opportunities enable students to receive college course credit and/or work experience that prepares them for college or entry into the workforce after graduation. Gainesville High School's Career, Technical and Agricultural Education (CTAE) program offers 18 career pathways within the 17 Georgia Career Clusters.
- The Howard E. Ivester Early College is a dual-enrollment high school located in the Chicopee Mill area of Gainesville. A \$2.2 million investment by the Ivester Foundation is helping a generation of high school students to get a head start on higher education while completing their high school degree.
- The Hall County School System offers 34 programs of choice and 50 career pathways providing students with unique learning experiences. There are 12 magnet schools and 20 schools of choice. The World Language Academy provides K-8 immersion language curriculum in Spanish, English and Mandarin Chinese, and the Da Vinci Academy (DVA) provides in-depth learning in the arts, sciences and/or technology for students in grades six through eight.
- There are nine private schools in Gainesville-Hall County, including Lakeview Academy, Riverside Military Academy (RMA) and Lanier Christian Academy. RMA averages approximately 500 cadets in grades 7-12 from 30 states and 30 nations. The annual economic impact that cadets and their families bring to Gainesville-Hall County each year is \$35 million. Lakeview Academy is an independent, college preparatory day school that enrolls over 560 students in grades K-12. Lakeview offers a rigorous curriculum with small classes that include Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) opportunities.
- Over 800 high school students participate in work-based learning (WBL). Business and industry leaders in Gainesville-Hall County are working with educators from K-12 and colleges to develop apprenticeships, WBL and dual enrollment as components of a major workforce development initiative.
- The Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce Workforce Development Task Force advocates to employers to hire high school students in an effort to increase their skills and build a sustainable workforce. In 2019, participating employers increased to 19 existing industries employing 71 high school students.
- Elachee Nature Science Center operates Elachee Nature Academy, a nature-based and fully accredited Preschool through 1st grade program, where children spend over 50% of their time learning outdoors.
- Elachee Nature Science Center is the only SACS/AdvancED-accredited nature center in the southeastern U.S. and serves more than 34,000 Preschool through Grade 12 children annually through STEAM-based environmental education field trips and Camp Elachee summer day camps.



University of North Georgia – Gainesville Campus

TOURISM

Lanier Islands Legacy Lodge will host the 2020 Georgia Governor's Tourism Conference this fall. This event is the largest tourism gathering in Georgia.

- The economic impact of Hall County's tourism industry reached a record high of \$330 million, according to a report released in 2018 by the Georgia Department of Economic Development and U. S. Travel Association.
- Lake Lanier Olympic Park hosted the 2019 American Canoe Association's Sprint National Championships and the 2018 ICF Dragon Boat World Championships. 800 athletes from 14 countries, 21 international officials and 500 volunteers participated in the 2018 event.
- Atlanta Botanical Gardens Gainesville, a 168-acre preserve and amphitheater, hosts events and performers including Marc Broussard and The Mavericks, Corey Smith with The Josephines, Vince Gill, The Four Tops and Indigo Girls. The Ada Mae Pass Ivester Children's Garden is set for a grand opening in March 2020 and will feature a collection of carnivorous plants, a build-a-fort area, a pond and a lawn labyrinth treehouse.

- Lanier Islands, a world-class 1,500-acre resort, is the most visited lakeside resort in Georgia and offers amenities for both families and corporate groups, such as golf and a business conference center. Margaritaville offers additional restaurants and a variety of activities for everyone. Lanier Islands is located only 35 minutes from Atlanta and employs approximately 400 people.
- The 1,500-acre Don Carter State Park completed phase two of construction and opened 12.5 miles of horse trails in 2018.
- The Atlanta Falcons' 50-acre headquarters and world-class training facility is located in Flowery Branch. The Falcons were the 2017 National Football Conference Champions.
- Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta, a 2.54-mile International Grand Prix Course, attracts 320,000 visitors annually. The new, state-of-the-art Michelin Tower was unveiled in 2019 and will serve as the primary hospitality and media facility during the 23rd Annual Motul Petit Le Mans October 7-10, 2020.
- The 2,674-acre Chicopee Woods Area Park has 8 miles of hiking trails within a 1,440-acre nature preserve that is one of Georgia's largest protected green spaces. The preserve also includes natural history, ecology and live animal exhibits, Hall County's agricultural center and 21 miles of mountain bike trails.
- The Arts Council recently held a groundbreaking ceremony to celebrate a 6,300 sq. ft. addition to the Smithgall Arts Center. The addition will feature an outdoor stage and pavilion, which will provide covered seating for over 300 guests or concert space for more than 2,000 people. Construction is underway and is set to be complete in early May.
- Elachee Nature Science Center has enhanced its outdoor, interpretive educational experiences with the addition of the Garden Trail, Trail of Trees and Georgia Pollinator Student Art exhibits.
- The City of Lula recently completed renovations on the former train depot. The building now serves as a community and event center for both railroad fans and residents.
- Interactive Neighborhood for Kids (INK) hosted over 78,000 guests in 2019 in the 24,000 sq. ft. Gainesville location.
- The Venue at Friendship Springs, a 40,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose event center, offers a 550-seat auditorium performance theatre and conference space in South Hall County.
- Lanier Technical College's Ramsey Conference Center is a 14,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose event center located just north of Gainesville on Georgia Highway 365. The center can seat 1,500 people theatre style or 750 banquet style.
- Antebellum in downtown Flowery Branch was named one of the "50 Best Southern Restaurants" and one of the "Top 100 Restaurants in the U.S." by OpenTable.
- The City of Gainesville has purchased 89 acres for a new, youth sports complex to be located at 2490 Old Cornelia Highway near White Sulphur Elementary. The new complex will have fields for baseball, softball, football, soccer and lacrosse along with playgrounds, a pavilion and walking trails.



The new Michelin Tower at Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta opened in fall 2019. The state-of-the-art facility houses four stories of hospitality suites, a media center, a rooftop deck and more.

VISION 2030

VISION 2030 works to position Gainesville-Hall County as the most enviable community in Georgia by the year 2030.

- Vision 2030 is a coordinated group of volunteers leading long-term initiatives, defined by the citizens. Acting as change agents, the group champions these initiatives and propels them forward through collaborative partnerships with government, education, business, and non-profits. Learn more: www.Vision2030.org.

- Vision 2030 has 12 working committees that concentrate on the community’s long-term initiatives, or [Big Ideas](#). These committees include a vibrant Public Art committee that has seen over \$1.09 million invested through public-private collaborations. “Art Everywhere” has become the mantra! Our education collaborative continues to concentrate on the 7th Grade Career Path Fair to help local middle school students become aware of career opportunities in Gainesville and Hall County. The “pro” greenspace development committee works side-by-side with government, recreation and developers to ensure our community has trails, parks and open green land. There is also an ongoing initiative to include our future millennial and Gen Z leaders in the vision and future projects.
- Vision 2030 wants all people who live, work and play in Hall County to feel welcome and get connected. That’s why Vision 2030 recently produced a FREE resource for sharing within organizations, businesses, neighborhoods or on social media. Vision 2030 will be directing all inquiries to the committees, the Chamber and the community. To view the video or learn more, visit www.Vision2030.org or watch on [YouTube](#).



Vision 2030’s Public Art Block pARTy features local artists and raises funds to purchase public art displays for the community. The next Public Art Block pARTy will be Friday, May 8, 2020 from 6 to 10 p.m. in The Royal Space (parking lot between Collegiate and Hunt Tower) in Downtown Gainesville.

HALLMARK 2015-2020

The HALLmark Initiative seeks to secure high quality jobs, a stable and growing tax base, the protection of existing investments, and an unparalleled quality of life for Greater Hall County.

- The Greater Hall Chamber secured major investments in its aggressive, five-year economic development plan for Gainesville-Hall County, HALLmark 2015-2020.
- The HALLmark 2015-2020 Initiative includes high quality jobs, a stable and growing tax base, a business-friendly environment, and an unparalleled quality of life. HALLmark’s five-year program goals seek to create 1,700 new jobs with \$250 million in capital investment, \$60 million in new annual payroll and to maintain the Gainesville MSA’s unemployment rate below that of the state and nation.
- The new HALLmark 2020-2025 program is seeking investment of \$2.3 million from private businesses to support economic development, VISION 2030, education and workforce development, which will ensure the economic viability of Gainesville-Hall County.
- The Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce Workforce Development Task Force advocates to employers to hire high school students in an effort to increase their skills and build a sustainable workforce. In 2019, participating employers increased to 19 manufacturers employing 71 high school students.
- The Chamber’s Economic Development, VISION 2030, Education and Leadership programs are funded through the HALLmark 2015-2020 Initiative.



GREATER HALL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Economic Development Council of the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce

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