



# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

2017

Pictured: Rendering of Lanier Technical College's Student Success and Allied Health Buildings on the new 95-acre campus in North Hall County; scheduled to open fall 2018



**GREATER HALL**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

## **GAINESVILLE-HALL COUNTY GEORGIA**

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 47 international companies representing 17 foreign countries. Georgia's Governor Nathan Deal, and Lt. Governor Casey Cagle, both call Hall County home.

## **Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce**

Gainesville and Hall County Economic Development Council

# BUSINESS

*The 2016 year-end summary includes 18 new and expanded businesses in Gainesville-Hall County announcing 800 jobs and \$163 million in capital investment.*

- Firms expanding their North American business included King's Hawaiian, SKF, Jinsung TEC, Lowers Risk Group, Kubota, Tatsumi, ElringKlinger, Wrigley, First Fresh Foods, Milliken & Co., Performance Foodservice, and The Louver Shop.
- Kubota has completed a 502,000 sq.-ft facility on their new 180-acre campus on Highway 365 in Gateway Industrial Centre, with a \$220 million investment and 580 additional jobs. Kubota employs 1,300 in Gainesville-Hall County.
- Mars Wrigley Confectionary added 170 new jobs at their Hall County facility, making it the largest fully integrated chewing gum manufacturer in the world.
- Tatsumi Intermodal USA, Inc., a logistics, warehousing and inventory management company based in Osaka, Japan, is building their second facility in Hall County, a 113,000 sq. ft. building on 35 acres in Gateway Industrial Centre on Highway 365. This is Tatsumi's fourth expansion since locating in 2001.
- Lowers Risk Group, an enterprise risk management company, is adding 150 new jobs to their Wholesale Screening Solutions business on Spout Springs Road in Flowery Branch. Wholesale Screening Solutions is a leading provider of public records and verifications to employment screening, tenant screening, and risk mitigation providers nationwide.
- Jinsung TEC of South Korea expanded their new North American headquarters and operations in Oakwood South Industrial Park to 150,000 sq. ft. The company manufactures undercarriage systems for construction equipment.
- Gainesville-based Mincey Marble will develop a new 350-400,000 square feet headquarters and manufacturing center on a 79-acre corporate campus in the Gainesville Business Park. Construction and development of the new campus will begin in 2017, and it is expected to open in 2018.
- ProCare Rx, a national healthcare IT company, is constructing an additional 31,200 sq. ft. facility off I-985 in Hall County. The new addition is anticipated to be complete by spring 2017. ProCare Rx has more than doubled its Georgia employment to 217 employees since opening its 40,000 sq. ft. headquarters and operations center in 2012.
- Pattillo Industrial Real Estate is marketing a 145,000 sq.-ft. industrial speculative building in the 250-acre Oakwood South Industrial Park, and Majestic Realty has completed a 300,000-square-foot speculative building for Golden Commerce Park in South Hall. Pattillo, Majestic Realty, Radial Property Group, Presco Properties, and Prologis have built speculative buildings in various industrial parks for expanding and new industry in the area.
- In 2016, *Site Selection Magazine* named Georgia the #1 State for Business for the fourth year in a row. *Area Development* and CNBC also rated Georgia top in the nation for new business and expansion. The International Economic Development Council rated the Georgia Department of Economic Development the best state economic development agency in the U.S.
- Hall County is a leader in agribusiness and food processing. In a 2016 report by Garner Economics, Gainesville – Hall MSA ranked as the highest concentrated metro area for food manufacturing and processing in the United States, with over 10,000 employees.



*Kubota's 502,000 sq. ft. facility on Highway 365 in Gateway Industrial Centre*

- Gainesville-Hall County companies, including Recro Pharmaceutical, the Georgia Poultry Laboratory Network, Theragenics, Atlanta Biologicals, Apotheca Inc. and Merial, are among the top life science firms in the region.
- The Lanier Technical College Business Incubator is a public/private partnership housed at Featherbone Communiversity. Thirty-seven businesses have been launched from the program, with 16 more start-ups in development. Nineteen patents, 11 copyrights and 21 trademarks have been developed.
- The 2016 Milken Institute Report named the Gainesville-Hall County Metro area as the top small Metro area in Georgia, number 4 in the Nation for job growth and top 10 in the Nation for best performing small Metros.
- According to the Georgia Department of Labor, 4,670 business establishments represented Hall County employment in 2016. Participation in the Greater Hall Chamber's monthly Small Business Seminars has grown 45% in the last two years. 96.6% of businesses are categorized as small, using the SBA's definition of fewer than 500 employees. 93.6% employ fewer than 50 people.
- According to a recent logistics study, Gainesville-Hall County has a growing cluster of 65 logistics firms that employ over 2,000 and provide freight brokerage, 3PL, cold-chain logistics and transportation services. Recent expanding firms include Lanier Cold Storage, XPO Logistics, Adams Transport, Tatsumi Intermodal, Syfan Logistics, GTO 2000, Eskimo Cold Storage, Tribe Transportation, Hollis Transport, and Mugele.



*The Georgia Center of Innovation for Logistics, Greater Hall Chamber and the University of North Georgia presented a Northeast Georgia Logistics Forum in December 2015 with information on harbor deepening and logistics updates.*

## POPULATION & HOUSING

*Gainesville-Hall County issued an all-time high number of building permits in 2016.*

- Gainesville- Hall County's population grew by 1.6% per year from 2010-2015. The 2017 population of Gainesville-Hall County is estimated to grow to 199,778.
- In 2015, the U.S. Census Bureau identified Gainesville-Hall County MSA among the fastest growing metropolitan areas in the United States with a growth rate of 7.7% from 2010 to 2015, adding 13,851 people during the period.
- In 2016, Hall County governments issued more than 1,000 new single-family home permits. Gainesville processed 440 single-family home permits, the highest annual total in the city's history. Flowery Branch issued 172 single-family home permits, and unincorporated Hall County processed another 372 single-family permits.
- The average single-family-home sale price in Gainesville-Hall County in 2016 was \$250,000, up 8% from 2015, and the median home sale price was \$257,000. The number of single-family home sales was up 8% in 2016 from a year earlier.
- Housing developments such as Sterling on the Lake (894 acres in Flowery Branch), Marina Bay on Lake Lanier (385 acres in North Hall County), Reunion (550 acres in Braselton) and Mundy Mill (400 acres in South Hall County) offer master-planned communities with amenities.



*Sterling on Lanier in Flowery Branch is located on 894 acres conveniently located near the new Northeast Georgia Medical Center Braselton in South Hall County.*

- High-quality retirement developments are thriving in Hall County. The recently constructed Ashton Senior Living Personal Home Care on Enota Drive is a 52,000-square-foot development with 65 units in Gainesville. Also on Enota Drive is BeeHive Homes, a new 19-suite personal care home in a residential setting. The new Lanier Lodge overlooking beautiful Lake Lanier at Thompson Bridge Road is nearly 95,000 square feet with 90 units, including 20 assisted living units.
- Cresswind at Lake Lanier, a 214-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. The development will have 700 homes once completed. Other growing retirement developments include The Holbrook, Lanier Village Estates and Myrtle Terraces.
- The Village at Deaton Creek for active adults in South Hall County was ranked one of the fastest growing residential developments in Metro Atlanta and Georgia and is completely built out with some 1,500 homes.
- Atlanta River Walk is a new planned 500-acre mixed-use development in Braselton. The project will be centered around a man-made “river” and feature international restaurants, high-end shopping, single and multi-family housing, Class A office park, senior housing, movie theater, boutique hotel, conference center, supermarket, and amphitheater.
- Plans are underway for a 200-acre mixed-use development off Ahaluna Drive in Gainesville. Oak Hill Companies has proposed a 700-residence retirement community with single-family, attached homes, independent living and assisted living units, as well as a commercial component fronting a portion of Dawsonville Highway 53.

## RETAIL

*Gainesville-Hall County has a primary trade area that serves over 500,000 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 square feet of retail space. Anchor tenants Academy Sports, Hobby Lobby, HomeGoods, Burlington and Five Below have opened in North Lake Square Shopping Center. The center is located across from several chain restaurants, and has additional out parcel space developed.
- One of the largest Kroger stores in the Southeast anchors the 200,000-square-foot retail shopping center, New Holland Market Place, located at Exit 24 and I-985. Chick-Fil-A, Taco Bell, Senor Fiesta, AutoZone, Verizon, Wilson Orthodontics, Hulsey Dentistry and McDonald’s are other tenants. Carolina Holdings is developing the project with Pacolet Milliken Enterprises.
- Recent census data indicates Gainesville-Hall County has a primary trade area that serves over 500,000 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 Fabric, PetSmart, Office Max, Kohl’s, Dick’s, and a full spectrum of popular automobile brand dealers.
- Gainesville’s Lakeshore Mall has been revitalized with landscape beautification, new signage, and many interior finishes and furnishing upgrades. A surge of outparcel redevelopment around Lakeshore Mall has followed, including a newly announced Golden Corral and Sonic Drive-In.
- The Thurmon Tanner Parkway extension is generating retail interest at I-985 Exits 12,16,17 and the new exit 14 in Oakwood to the highly successful 500,000-square-foot Stonebridge Village Center on Spout Springs Road in Flowery Branch. Restaurants such as Steak n’ Shake, Starbucks, Cook Out and Captain D’s, a hotel development, and the newly relocated Milton Martin Toyota dealership are leading the retail activity in South Hall County.
- Highway 365 North is a growing new retail and commercial corridor with access improvements and new developments like Kubota Manufacturing’s facility, the new 95-acre campus of Lanier Technical College and Gateway Industrial Centre.



*Officials cut ribbon at the new Hobby Lobby at the North Lake Square Shopping Center on Highway 53 in Gainesville.*

# HEALTHCARE

*NGMC in Gainesville has ranked as Georgia's top heart hospital for 11 consecutive years. In December 2016, NGMC announced plans to develop a graduate medical education program.*

- Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) in Gainesville is rated #1 in Georgia for Overall Hospital Care by CareChex, a national healthcare ratings organization. CareChex also rates NGMC as #1 in Georgia for Women's Health, Cardiac Care, Heart Failure Treatment and Stroke Care.
- NGMC was rated in 2014 by Truven Health Analytics as one of the nation's Top 100 Hospitals. It was the only hospital in Georgia in the Large Community Hospitals Category to be named.
- A recent study by the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce indicated Hall County is served by 338 Health Care Service Providers that employ nearly 12,600, or 15.4% of the Hall County workforce, producing approximately \$575 million in annual wages. Almost 80% of those jobs are located in the region's healthcare epicenter in Gainesville.
- NGMC continues to surpass the \$1 billion mark in local and state economic impact, according to an annual study conducted by the Georgia Hospital Association.
- The Northeast Georgia Medical Center Braselton expanded in September 2016 by adding new labor and delivery services. A second, 113,000-square-foot medical office building attached to the new 100-bed hospital houses numerous physician offices, cardiac and vascular labs, and cardiopulmonary rehabilitation. Another 100,000-square-foot medical office building on the campus includes an urgent care center, imaging center, physical and occupational therapy, radiation and medical oncology, endoscopy and lab services, and physician offices representing more than 20 medical specialties.
- Over 100 new physicians joined the staff at Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) in 2016. In 2015, NGHS hired more than 3,000 new employees to accommodate the opening of NGMC Braselton, and to accommodate open and growing positions throughout the Health System. More than 600 physicians representing more than 50 specialties are currently on staff at NGMC. The System currently employs more than 8,000 people throughout the region. For six consecutive years, the Atlanta-Journal Constitution has honored NGHS as one of Metro Atlanta's Top Workplaces.



*Northeast Georgia Medical Center Braselton added new labor and delivery services in 2016.*

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*In December 2016, NGMC announced plans to develop a graduate medical education (GME) program to offer residencies to physicians after medical school. The program's first medical residents are projected to arrive in 2019, and NGMC anticipates as many as 170 residents by 2023 – which would make the program one of the largest in the state. The GME program will have an estimated \$66 million economic impact on the Hall County economy from 2019 to 2023, with an additional \$18 million local economic impact predicted for each year after. Similarly, the program is anticipated to generate more than 90 additional community jobs in 2019, rising to as many as 300 jobs by 2023.*

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- Good News Clinics recently expanded facilities and provides health and dental care to over 4,000 uninsured patients in Hall County annually. Medical services provided in 2015 were valued at \$20 million.
  - Three physician groups based in Hall County – The 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*.
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- The Longstreet Clinic, P.C. (TLC) is a physician-owned, fully integrated multi-specialty medical group committed to meeting growing patient needs for accessible, cost-effective care. TLC has expanded its facilities and services available across Northeast Georgia and extended hours and weekends in the Gainesville and Oakwood locations. TLC welcomed several primary care and specialty physicians and continues to recruit additional physicians.
- The Longstreet Clinic (TLC) cared for nearly 200,000 patients from across Northeast Georgia in 2016. Currently, TLC is comprised of 198 Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers, and employs 760 individuals. TLC occupies 150,000 square feet of medical office across the region and has an annual budget of over \$100 million.
- Expansion of TLC’s presence in Braselton remains a top priority, with the construction of High Point, in collaboration with Northeast Georgia Diagnostic Clinic. Occupancy of High Point is slated for early 2017.
- Two new 45,000 sq. ft. medical office buildings have been completed at Riverstone Medical Development next to the new NGMC in Braselton. The buildings will be ready for occupancy by early 2017.
- A new Guilford Immediate Care medical building is under development at the corner of Mundy Mill Road and Interstate 985 in Oakwood. The project will include a 10,300 sq. ft. building with a garden area, creating aesthetic appeal at Exits 16 and 17.

## 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.*

- Downtown Gainesville has a new Comprehensive Development Plan. Gainesville already has in place what new cities are paying hundreds of millions of dollars to create: a four-sided square, historic charm and locally owned restaurants and shops.
- 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.
- Gainesville has redeveloped Roosevelt Square as an event space at the crossroads of the trail network and pedestrian bridge in Downtown Gainesville, connecting Gainesville’s Downtown with Midtown. Future plans include a hotel-conference center, a new parking garage, and office buildings with retail and restaurants.
- The cities of Flowery Branch and Oakwood are redeveloping their downtown areas. Both cities are planning for substantial growth around the Thurmon Tanner Parkway corridor, as well as other areas throughout the cities. Flowery Branch recently opened the Lights Ferry connection to connect its downtown area to McEver Road with a traffic circle. Plans are underway for the construction of a new City Hall in Flowery Branch, allowing room for downtown development and retail space. The City of Lula has initiated a streetscape and downtown beautification effort punctuated by the completed Veterans Park, a network of interconnected sidewalks and renovation of Lula’s historic structures.
- Brenau University recently opened its Center for Graduate School programs in Downtown Gainesville and anticipates up to 700 master’s and doctoral students. Brenau has also developed a new intercollegiate softball complex, with track and field facilities to come, on Jesse Jewell Parkway adjacent to the redevelopment activity at New Holland.
- Left Nut Brewing Company, a new microbrewery, opened for tours and tastings in Gainesville’s Chicopee Mill in 2016. Three growler shop locations have opened in Flowery Branch and Gainesville.



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

# INFRASTRUCTURE

*Lake Lanier provides drinking water for 60% of Georgians.*

- Sewer for Highway 365 North is under development with funding support from the infrastructure Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST).
- In March 2015, voters approved the SPLOST VII to invest a projected \$158 million for road improvements, water and sewer, building construction, library renovation, parks, 911 system upgrades, public safety, fire and EMS, and other municipal projects.
- Lake Sidney Lanier, a 38,000-acre reservoir with 692 miles of shoreline, is a multi-purpose lake that provides drinking water for 60% of Georgians and recreation for 7.5 million visitors annually.
- The Savannah Harbor Expansion Project to deepen one of the nation's most critical commerce routes to 47 feet, will move forward in time to solidify trade routes for newer, larger post-Panama Expansion ships. The effect will be lower shipping costs and transport times for regional businesses and many Hall County industries that utilize Georgia's ports. Dredging will be completed as early as 2019.
- Cherokee Bluffs Park in South Hall County opened in 2015, with the first of three phases complete, including trails, playground, disc-golf course, 3-D archery range and an amphitheater.
- Gainesville's Lee Gilmer Airport continues to attract air travel, with two runways at 4,000 and 5,500 feet, an Instrument Landing System (ILS), and 93 hangars; the airport now accommodates aircrafts up to 100,000 pounds.
- A recently completed pedestrian tunnel connects both sides of the Lake Lanier Olympic Park on Clarks Bridge Road. The Park hosted the 2016 Pan American Championships, the Continental Olympic Qualifier and the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games. Recent investments in the venue are leading to additional events like the 2017 USA Canoe Kayak Trials.



*Lake Lanier is a 38,000-acre reservoir with 692 miles of shoreline and serves 7.5 million visitors annually.*

# EDUCATION

*Lanier Technical College is expanding and relocating its main campus to a 95-acre site just north of Gainesville on Georgia Hwy 365.*

- Three Gainesville-Hall County higher education institutions – Brenau University, University of North Georgia (UNG) and Lanier Technical College – are at record high enrollment with over 16,000 students.
- Lanier Technical College enrolls 3,600 students and offers 155 programs of study, including 31 associate degree programs, 38 diploma programs, and 86 technical certificate of credit programs. Programs include Allied Health, Business and Computer Technology, Industrial and Technical studies, and Professional Services. Graduates enjoy a 100% job placement rate.



*Governor Nathan Deal signed the state budget at the site of Lanier Technical College's new campus in Hall County, scheduled to open in fall 2018.*

- Business and industry leaders in Hall County are working with educators from K-12 and colleges to develop apprenticeships, work-based learning and dual enrollment as components of a major workforce development initiative.
- Lanier Technical College (LTC) continues to focus on workforce development. A new German-style apprenticeship program, in partnership with IMS Gear, combines class time and work experience in the field of Mechatronics. The program is consistently growing and producing trained employees.
- Lanier Technical College is expanding and relocating its main campus to a 95-acre site just north of Gainesville on Georgia Hwy 365. The new \$100 million state-of-the-art campus is scheduled to open in fall 2018 with classes starting in January 2019. The new campus will have 335,000 sq. ft. of teaching space and will be able to accommodate 5,000 students.
- Lanier Technical College, recently named Georgia's Technical College of the Year, is the fastest growing Technical College in Georgia and one of the top 50 fastest growing two-year colleges in the nation.
- LTC is home to the Georgia Advanced Manufacturing Technology Center with technologies in automation, controls and robotics, and has maintained the gold standard of accreditation.

- Brenau University recently opened its Center for Graduate School programs in Downtown Gainesville and anticipates up to 700 master's and doctoral students. Already, the new Center has 250 graduate students enrolled in the occupational therapy program and 120 enrolled in the three-year physical therapy program.



*Brenau University – Gainesville Campus*

- Northeast Georgia Medical Center announced that it will begin a new Graduate Medical Education Program in 2019, and it will grow to more than 170 Graduate Medical Residents by 2023.

- The University of North Georgia (UNG) is the sixth largest university in Georgia and has more than 18,000 students from all fifty states, representing 98 countries worldwide. UNG's five campuses are located across northeast Georgia in Blue Ridge, Cumming, Dahlonega, Gainesville, and Oconee County. UNG offers more than 100 programs of study, including certificates, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, and professional doctoral programs. 2,897 degrees and awards were conferred in 2016, with a growth of 5.4 percent enrollment over the previous year.

- UNG's Gainesville Campus has more than 7,500 students and offers 22 bachelor's degree programs, associate degrees with nearly 50 programs of study, three graduate degree programs, and 5 certificate programs.



*University of North Georgia – Gainesville Campus*

- UNG's Mike Cottrell College of Business expanded its program to Gainesville and has now added Technology Leadership as a graduate-level certificate program. The Cottrell MBA program is in its second year of evening classes on the Gainesville campus.

- More than 34,500 students 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, including West Hall, Johnson and North Hall High Schools.

- Gainesville City School System is recognized for being one of the first charter districts in the State of Georgia. Each school provides core knowledge instruction while offering focused enrichment through an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, arts, math, language, global studies and leadership. Gainesville City's elementary schools offer open enrollment through parent choice. Gainesville High School has received recognition as an Advanced Placement STEM, STEM Achievement and Humanities school. Mundy Mill Academy, a new elementary school, is scheduled to open August 2017.

- The Hall County School System offers public school options. With a number of charter schools, magnet schools and schools of choice, The World Language Academy provides K-8 immersion language curriculum in Spanish, English and Mandarin Chinese. The Da Vinci Academy provides in-depth learning in the arts, sciences and technology in South Hall, and a new Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) program at North Hall High School. In 2016, a new dual-enrollment high school called Early College at Jones was launched in partnership with the University of North Georgia and Lanier Technical College to help students get a head start on higher education.
- Gainesville City and Hall County Schools offer work-based learning opportunities with local businesses through career preparation academies at Lanier Charter Career Academy and traditional high schools in both systems. Over 800 students participate in Work-Base Learning programs.
- There are nine private schools in Gainesville-Hall County, including Lakeview Academy, Riverside Military Academy (RMA) and Lanier Christian Academy. RMA averages over 530 cadets from 30 states and 25 nations. The annual economic impact that cadets/families bring to Gainesville- Hall County each year is \$15 million. Lakeview Academy is building a two-story addition with 14-16 classrooms, two science labs, a computer/robotics lab, and several learning support rooms, to be completed in time for the 2017-2018 school year.
- Elachee Nature Science Center operates Elachee Nature Academy, a nature-based and fully accredited Preschool through 2<sup>nd</sup>, grade program. Elachee Nature Academy is the first of its kind in Georgia and the Southeast, where children spend over 50% of their time learning outdoors.

## TOURISM

*The first phase of construction improvements at the Lake Lanier Olympic Park were completed ahead of the 2016 Pan American Championships, and additional investments are planned for attracting the next world-class events.*

- The economic impact of Hall County’s tourism industry reached a record high of \$299.9 million in 2015, according a report released in January 2017 by the Georgia Department of Economic Development and U. S. Travel Association.
- Atlanta Botanical Gardens Gainesville, a 168-acre preserve that has hosted The Four Tops, Indigo Girls and Loretta Lynn, opened in spring 2015. The \$20 million project includes vast gardens, a visitor’s center, children’s garden, amphitheater and pavilions.
- The 1,500-acre Don Carter State Park features a visitor’s center, cabins, RV and campsites, boat ramps, a beach area, trails and amenities on the shores of Lake Lanier. The second development phase of the Park is under construction and will offer over 12 miles of new horse trails and hiking trails.
- The Lake Lanier Olympic Park in North Hall County hosted the 2016 Pan Am Championships for Canoe/Kayak and the 2016 Continental Olympic Qualifier for the Americas. The Lake Lanier Olympic Park had a major impact in 2016 with events like the Pan Am Championship, the Continental Olympic Qualifier, the Dragon Boat Festival and the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games.
- Lanier Islands, a world-class 1,500-acre resort in South Hall County, received the esteemed Southern Living Hotel Collection distinction and a 2015 Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence. The resort recently completed investment in the Legacy Lodge Hotel and Conference Center, golf course improvements, beachfront water park, harbor development, an outdoor concert venue, a health spa and a new “Winter Wonderland.” The resort, located only 35 minutes from Atlanta, employs over 400 people.



*Championships for Canoe/Kayak and 2016 Continental Olympic Qualifier, and the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games.*

- The Atlanta Falcons National Football League team has its 50-acre headquarters and world-class training facility in Flowery Branch. The 2016-17 Falcons team won the NFC Championship and will play in Super Bowl 51.
- Road Atlanta, a 2.54-mile International Grand Prix course, attracts 320,000 visitors annually. Road Atlanta will host the 20th anniversary Petit Le Mans October 4-7 2017, drawing some 150,000 visitors from around the world.
- Chicopee Woods Park is a 1,500-acre nature preserve with 13 miles of hiking trails, a plant and animal sanctuary, an interactive museum, and more than 21 miles of mountain bike trails.
- Interactive Neighborhood for Kids (INK) saw over 70,000 guests in 2016 in the 24,000-square-foot Gainesville location. Fundraising efforts are currently underway to develop a new 50,000 square foot children’s museum on the southern tip of Gainesville - Hall County.
- Construction has begun on the next phases of the Highlands to Islands Trail and Gainesville’s Midtown Greenway, a multi-purpose trail for biking, walking and running that will connect Gainesville’s Midtown Gateway to the University of North Georgia Gainesville Campus and the Chicopee Woods conservation area.
- The Venue at Friendship Springs is a new 40,000-square-foot multi-purpose event center that offers a 550-seat auditorium and performance theatre, banquet rooms and conference space in South Hall County near the intersection of Friendship and Spout Springs Roads.



*Owner, Arthur Blank celebrates the 2017 NFC Championship win with his wife and quarterback, Matt Ryan. The Atlanta Falcons 50-acre headquarters is located in Flowery Branch*

## VISION 2030

*In 2015, VISION 2030 initiated a Public Art Tour and Free Range Art Project for the public.*

- The Greater Hall Chamber VISION 2030 program provides a common vision for what Gainesville and Hall County would look like in the year 2030. In 2005, more than 1,000 citizens representing the breadth of the community participated in the visioning process, and developed over 4,000 ideas, images and recommendations. From that, the “Big Ideas” were drafted as a strategic way to accomplish the goals or common vision. Today, the VISION 2030 program is a coordinated group of volunteers that champions long term initiatives and propels them forward through collaborative partnerships with government, education, business, and non-profits.
- To date, The Public Art Committee has installed 15 pieces of public art and created a walking tour and map of over 30 works of art in a variety of media.
- VISION 2030 Big Ideas include a Harbor Town development on Lake Lanier, additional development of greenspace in Hall County, a revitalization of the Lake Lanier Olympic Park for sprint canoe, kayak and rowing, a model for diversity, and a healthcare initiative to battle adult and pediatric obesity and promote living healthier and longer. [www.vision2030.org](http://www.vision2030.org)



*The VISION 2030 Art Committee unveiled the first piece of the Free Range Art Project in Downtown Gainesville in 2015.*

# 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 has secured major investments in its aggressive, five-year economic development plan for Gainesville-Hall County called HALLmark 2015-2020. Area businesses are investing \$2.65 million in the program to ensure the economic viability of our region.
- The benefits of HALLmark include 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 Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce Workforce Development Task Force served as a voice to employers to hire high school students and increase skills for a sustainable workforce. In 2016, participating employers increased to 22 manufacturers employing 60 high school students, up from only 4 students in 2015.
- The Chamber's Economic Development, VISION 2030, Education and Leadership programs are funded through the HALLmark Initiative.



*Gainesville-Hall County enjoys an unparalleled quality of life and a sound economic future for business due to the vision and investment of HALLmark partners.*



*Jaemor Farms is a 350-acre family owned produce farm and market in North Hall County. The farm welcomes visitors from all over the world, contributing \$18 million in economic impact and shipping products to 47 states in 2016.*



*2017 College Football National Championship MVP  
and Gainesville native, Deshaun Watson.*

Photo: Morgan Lee, AccessWDUN.com



**GREATER HALL**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Economic Development Council of the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce

**Kit Dunlap**, President & CEO

**Tim Evans**, Vice President • **Shelley Davis**, Vice President of Existing Industry

**Amanda Lewis**, Project Manager • **Garrett Wiley**, Project Manager & Government Affairs

230 E.E. Butler Parkway • Gainesville, Georgia 30501

770-532-6206

tim@ghcc.com • sdavis@ghcc.com • alewis@ghcc.com • gwiley@ghcc.com

**www.greaterhallchamber.com**

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