

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 320 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



Gainesville Renaissance, a \$22.4 million mixed-use development located on the Fourth Side of the Square in Downtown Gainesville, has started construction. The three-story project includes 20,000 sq. ft. of retail and restaurant space, eight condominiums and a pocket park. Additionally, the second floor will house Brenau University's Lynn J. Darby School of Psychology and Adolescent Counseling.



GREATER HALL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

November 2020

BUSINESS

The 2020 fiscal year summary included 13 new and expanded businesses in Gainesville-Hall County adding 785 jobs and \$267 million in capital investment. Since 2015, 112 new and expanded businesses have announced 5,600 jobs and \$1.4 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, Alfrex USA, Amazon, American Yazaki Corporation, Boehringer Ingelheim, Geveko Markings, KAB Health, Marel, Mars Wrigley Confectionary, PPG, Syfan Logistics and Testrite.
- *Site Selection* magazine named Gainesville-Hall County one of the top performing small metro areas in Georgia for 2018, 2019 and 2020. *Site Selection* and *Area Development* magazines have also named Georgia the #1 State for Business for seven consecutive years. CNBC has 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, created 800 jobs and invested more than \$65 million in their new manufacturing headquarters in Gainesville-Hall County.
- Alfrex, a Korean manufacturer of fireproof exterior panels, invested \$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.
- Dongwon Tech Corporation, a Korean supplier of heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) ducts and CR/DR systems, is planning to invest \$700,000 to open a 20,000 sq. ft. advanced manufacturing facility and sales office off Centennial Drive in Gainesville. The facility will create approximately 40 jobs.
- Kubota Manufacturing of America Corporation (KMA) is currently constructing their new Research and Development Center on 280 acres near Georgia Highway 365, signifying their latest expansion in Gainesville-Hall County. The \$85 million project will serve all of North America and create 67 jobs primarily in engineering and other technical fields. Gainesville-based Carroll Daniel Construction is the design builder for the project.
- In May 2020, Amazon opened a new delivery station in Lanier Logistics Center located in Buford-Hall County. The 112-acre development consists of two buildings totaling more than 1 million square feet and was developed by IDI Logistics. The delivery station created more than 200 full-time jobs.
- Agile Cold Storage is constructing a 150,000 sq. ft. cold storage facility in Gainesville, creating approximately 100 jobs. The \$35 million facility will be the fifth cold storage operation in Hall County and will serve a large network of food and pharmaceutical manufacturers that rely on cold-chain logistics.
- Geveko Markings, a Swedish manufacturer, completed their 80,000 sq. ft. North American headquarters and manufacturing facility in Gainesville Business Park. The company produces thermoplastic elastomer (TPE) road and pavement markings and plans to employ 75 people at the Gainesville facility.
- The City of Gainesville is working toward a new, 1,300-acre business park located between Athens Highway and Candler Road in Gainesville-Hall County. The Gainesville 85 Business Park will include water features and walking trails.



Fox Factory's new, 320,000 sq. ft. manufacturing headquarters was recently completed in Gainesville Industrial Park West.

- Gainesville-Hall County companies, including Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health, Recro Pharma, Atlanta Biologicals, Georgia Poultry Laboratory Network, KAB Health, Apotheca, Inc. and Theragenics are among the top life science firms in Hall County.
- Pattillo Industrial Real Estate developed a 300,000 sq. ft. speculative building in the 250-acre Oakwood South Industrial Park and announced plans to develop another facility in Flowery Branch. Pattillo Industrial Real Estate, Logistics Property Company, Radial Property Group, McCraney Property Company, Crow Industrial, 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 that provides support to start-up companies, inventors and entrepreneurs.
- According to the Georgia Department of Labor, 4,764 business establishments represented Gainesville-Hall County employment in 2020. 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 the Greater Hall Chamber's 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.



Kubota Manufacturing of America Corporation (KMA) was joined by Governor Brian Kemp, Hall County elected officials, and community leaders to break ground for their new, 280-acre engineering and design center. Gainesville-based Carroll Daniel Construction is the design builder for the project.

POPULATION & HOUSING

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

- Gainesville-Hall County's population grew by 13.8% from 2010-2019. The population of Gainesville-Hall County was 204,441 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.
- High-quality retirement developments are thriving in Gainesville-Hall County. Ashton Senior Living and BeeHive Homes of Gainesville have 65 units and 19 personal care homes, respectively. 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.
- Lanier Village Estates, a retirement community located in North Hall, has 303 independent living apartments, 40 assisted living suites, 31 carriage homes and 64 skilled-care rooms. The facility is currently adding 31 new cottages as part of their 24-acre expansion, which will be complete in June 2021.
- *Where to Retire* magazine 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."

- Atlanta-based Terwilliger Pappas is currently constructing Phase I of Solis Gainesville, a mixed-use development featuring retail and restaurant space, as well as apartments, in the Downtown/Midtown area of Gainesville.
- 53 West Luxury Apartments, located off Mundy Mill Road in Oakwood, will soon complete Phase II of the project for a total of 460 apartments with full amenities including gated access, a dog park, walking trails and co-working space.
- The Mill at New Holland is a new, 248-unit complex located behind the Kroger Marketplace off Jesse Jewell Parkway in Gainesville. The complex has one, two and three-bedroom luxury apartments available for rent complete with full amenities.
- 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 under development 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.
- Ncredible Properties, a residential development and investment arm of Gainesville-based The Norton Agency, plans to build 30 cottages and restore several original mill houses as part of a 16.6-acre rental community, known as Liberty Lakeview, off Quarry Street in the historic New Holland community. The community will feature a gated entrance, playground and fire pit with walking trails and a dog park also in the plans. Leasing is already underway, and the project is set to be complete in 2022.
- University Commons in Oakwood is a new, 23-unit development consisting of three-bedroom cottages on Frontage Road with 18 units complete. Additionally, a 152-unit apartment complex, known as The Prox, and a 259-unit apartment complex were both approved for development. All three developments are positioned to serve as student housing for the University of North Georgia Gainesville campus.
- Oakwood also approved a 169-unit apartment complex to be developed on 6.9 acres off Mundy Mill Road.
- East Main I and 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 II.
- A 375-home subdivision on 220 acres between Gillsville Highway and Gaines Mill Road has been approved. 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 1,800,000 people in Northeast Georgia and is the region's major retail and employment center.

- New Holland Market, located at Exit 24 in Gainesville, is one of the area's fastest-growing retail developments offering a Kroger Marketplace, a 29,000 sq. ft. Beverly's Ace Hardware, a variety of fast food and casual-dining restaurants, medical offices and The Mill at New Holland, a 248-unit apartment complex.
- Dawsonville Highway, another successful retail corridor located in Gainesville, offers over 1.7 million sq. ft. of retail and restaurant space.
- The highly successful, 500,000 sq. ft. Stonebridge Village Center and Lanier Islands Parkway/Friendship Road located in South Hall, generate additional retail and restaurant interest along the I-985 corridor.



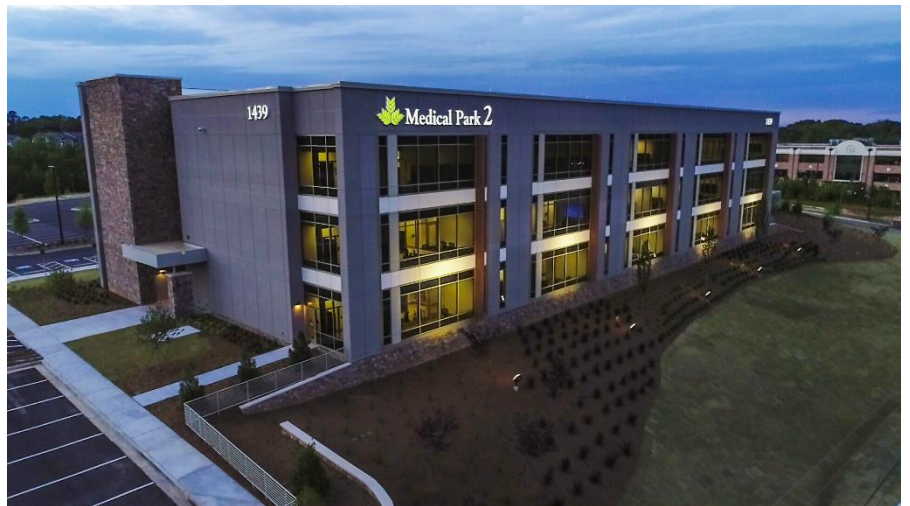
Gainesville's Downtown Square has Main Street USA designation and offers unique dining and shopping experiences.

- Downtown Gainesville is vibrant. New developments, including Gainesville Renaissance and Solis Gainesville, will add additional retail and restaurant space to the urban center.
- Census data indicates Gainesville-Hall County has a primary trade area that serves over 1,800,000 Northeast Georgia residents and is the region's major retail and employment center for consumer goods, automobiles, restaurants 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 healthcare in a variety of specialties right at home.

- According to a recent healthcare study, Gainesville-Hall County is home to 447 healthcare service providers employing 14,725 people, or approximately 14% of the Hall County workforce. Nearly 75% 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 by the American Stroke Association for its stroke care, is a verified Level II Trauma Center, has the state's first Emergency Cardiac Care Center Designation, was the only cancer program in Georgia to receive the 2018 Outstanding Achievement Award for cancer services and was the first in the state to receive recognition as a Center of Excellence for Hernia and Robotic Surgery. NGMC also joined the Winship Cancer Network as an affiliate of the Winship Cancer Institute of Emory University, expanding access to cancer care in our region.
- Northeast Georgia Medical Center has now surpassed the \$2 billion mark in local and state economic impact. More than 1,200 providers are a part of the medical staff at NGMC, and NGHS currently employs more than 9,000 people throughout the region.
- NGMC's Graduate Medical Education (GME) program expanded to 64 residents in General Surgery, Internal Medicine and Family Medicine programs in 2020. The program plans to extend to more than 200 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.
- For 25 years, Longstreet Clinic has been a leading-edge, primary care and multispecialty medical group with more than 475,000 patient visits at 10 office locations across Northeast Georgia in 2019. The independent, physician-owned medical group has more than 200 Physicians and Advanced Practice Providers across 19 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 was recently completed. The 72,000 sq. ft. medical office building is home to the Graduate Medical Education (GME) program, several NGPG practices and a new retail pharmacy.

- Longstreet Clinic is consistently recognized by the community and healthcare industry for its high-quality care and innovation. In 2020, the practice was voted “Best in Hall” in seven different categories, ranked the 10th largest Physician Group Practice in greater Atlanta by the Atlanta Business Chronicle and the 2nd largest independent practice. Five physicians were honored as “Top Doctors” in *Georgia Trend* magazine, and four were honored as *Atlanta* magazine “Top Doctors.”
- Good News Clinics is a 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.
- The implementation of EPIC, one of the largest healthcare software programs, at NGHS, NGPG, The Heart Center, Longstreet Clinic and Good News Clinics has fostered more connectivity between providers and allowed for seamless patient care through the sharing of one medical record.
- Emory Healthcare is constructing a new, 29,000 sq. ft. Orthopaedics and Spine Center at IBM Performance Fields in Flowery Branch, home of the Atlanta Falcons. The new musculoskeletal and sports medicine clinic will open in late 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.

- Gainesville Renaissance, a mixed-use development located on the Fourth Side of the Square in Downtown Gainesville, has started construction. The project includes 20,000 sq. ft. of retail and restaurant space, eight condominiums and a pocket park. Additionally, the second floor will house Brenau University’s Lynn J. Darby School of Psychology and Adolescent Counseling.
- Atlanta-based Terwilliger Pappas recently broke ground on Solis Gainesville, a \$48 million mixed-use development that will include 10,000 sq. ft. of retail or restaurant space and 220 market-rate apartments scheduled to be complete in May 2022. Terwilliger Pappas also plans to purchase the Midtown City Block to build an additional 5,000 sq. ft. of retail or restaurant space and 180 apartments.
- Capstone Property Group purchased the iconic 111 Green Street Building located in Downtown Gainesville with plans to develop an upscale, 50-room boutique hotel.
- 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 beautification effort punctuated by the completed Veterans Park and fully renovated train depot.
- 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. The project also involves two parks, including a farmer’s market, and will focus on streetscaping the downtown area. This 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, a wine bar and a craft distillery 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.



Solis Gainesville, a \$48 million mixed-use project including retail/restaurant space and 220 market-rate apartments, is currently under development and will be complete in May 2022.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Lake Lanier provides drinking water for 65% of Georgians.

- The Northeast Georgia Inland Port, an inland port terminal, will be developed on 104 acres in the Gateway Industrial Centre near Georgia Highway 365. Set to open in 2023, the new inland port will be operated by the Georgia Ports Authority and served by Norfolk Southern Railway with direct service between Gainesville and Savannah.
- 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.
- 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'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.
- Gainesville has started work on several beautification projects including streetscape improvements, signage, upgraded crosswalks and the greening of the pedestrian "moat" in downtown.
- The Hall County Library – Gainesville Branch recently reopened after a \$5 million renovation with new additions such as floor-to-ceiling windows, a dedicated story time room, study rooms and a space for genealogy and local history research. The project was funded by a grant from the University System of Georgia and local SPLOST dollars and impact fees.
- The newly opened 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 went 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.



The Hall County Library – Gainesville Branch recently completed \$5 million in renovations including study rooms and the new Sandra Dunagan Deal Storytime Room.

EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Lanier Technical College reached the highest enrollment numbers in its 55-year history with 5,059 students enrolled for fall 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's main campus is located on a 95-acre site on Georgia Highway 365. The \$135 million state-of-the-art campus opened for classes in 2019 and has 335,000 sq. ft. of teaching space. The college reached the highest enrollment numbers in its 55-year history with 5,066 students enrolled for the fall 2020 semester, up 9.7% from fall 2019. Graduates enjoy a 100% job placement rate.
- Lanier Technical College continues to focus on workforce development with a German-style apprenticeship program partnership combining class time and on the job training (OJT) in the fields of Mechatronics, Industrial Maintenance, Machining, Welding and Quality Assurance. 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.

- Lanier Technical College offers 155 programs of study including eight recently added programs: Carpentry Technology, Computer Programming, Cybersecurity, 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.

- Brenau University brings more than 3,600 students from 43 states and 18 countries to Hall County and is a key economic contributor with an annual operating budget of \$62 million and \$23 million in payroll for 440 full-time and 390 part-time employees. The Graduate School prepares more than 1,400 masters and doctoral students in academic programs that are in demand in today's economy. Currently, Brenau offers four doctoral programs in Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Nursing Practice and Education.

- A new Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies is the latest academic offering within the Ivester College of Health Sciences, and plans are underway to offer a doctoral degree as part of the Lynn J. Darby School of Psychology and Adolescent Counseling, to be located within Gainesville Renaissance in Downtown Gainesville. Additionally, the Mary Inez Grindle School of Nursing has grown from 252 students in fall 2018 to 393 students in fall 2020. The growth is due, in part, to a new accelerated bachelor of science in nursing. The university plans to launch an entry-level master of science in nursing in May 2021.

- The University of North Georgia (UNG) has over 20,000 students across five campuses and online; while over 80 percent of those students come from a 30-county service region in Northeast Georgia, UNG enrolls students from 46 states, 2 U.S. territories and 84 countries.

- UNG contributed more than \$667 million in economic impact to Northeast Georgia in fiscal year 2018 and was ranked third among public universities in Georgia on *Money* magazine's list of Best Colleges released in August 2020.

- UNG's Gainesville Campus has over 7,700 students and provides a set of comprehensive post-secondary educational offerings with over 40 bachelor's degree programs, associate degrees with nearly 40 programs of study, 7 graduate degree programs, and over 15 certificate programs.

- The University of North Georgia is completing a seven building, 165,000 sq. ft. expansion on the Gainesville Campus, set to open in fall 2021. The development will support the growing student population and expanding programs on campus, including updated classroom and lab facilities for nursing, visual arts, film and digital media, communications, media and journalism, the Institute for Environmental and Spatial Analysis, and Professional and Continuing Education.

- Hall County and Gainesville City School Systems have more than 34,000 students enrolled in pre-kindergarten through grade 12. The Hall County School System offers 21 Programs of Choice, including the rigorous and globally recognized International Baccalaureate (IB) program, as well as 12 Magnet Schools and more than 50 Career, Technical, and Agricultural Education (CTAE) pathways providing students with unique learning experiences. 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.



Lanier Technical College – Gainesville Campus



Brenau University – Gainesville Campus

- Gainesville City and Hall County School Systems 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 successful 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. Hall County School System recently unveiled a manufacturing center at West Hall High School as part of the manufacturing pathway offered to students.
- The Gainesville City School System (GCSS) offers a centralized student success center, known as The Hub, at Gainesville High School. The Hub offers various support services for students and families in Gainesville-Hall County including access to mental and behavioral health, workforce development, college and career preparatory, and other services that align with the school district's wraparound initiatives.
- GCSS elementary schools offer specialized areas of instruction and 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 Advanced Placement (AP) Honor School, earning distinction in AP STEM, AP STEM Achievement, and AP Access and Support. The school's rigorous AP program offers 25 AP courses, which include a wide selection of course offerings based on aptitude and interest. An AP Capstone Diploma or Certificate is awarded to graduating scholars.
- 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 get a head start on higher education while completing their high school degree. The Hall County School System partners with Lanier Technical College, the University of North Georgia and Brenau University.
- Education SPLOST VI passed with more than 67% approval from Hall County voters in June 2020, and the bond referendums for Gainesville City and Hall County schools received 72% and 65% approval, respectively. E-SPLOST revenues and the general obligation bonds are allowing Gainesville City and Hall County schools to move forward with several long-term projects.
- Gainesville City School System's primary projects for E-SPLOST include the construction of a new middle school to serve Gainesville Exploration and Mundy Mill Academies' school cluster and the revamping of the Gainesville High School campus to include a new Advanced Studies Building, Student Activities Center, Instructional Building, and a new Cafeteria and Media Center Building.
- Following the passage of E-SPLOST VI and the general obligation bonds, Hall County School System was able to complete several projects and has additional projects in the design phase, which will soon be underway, including Cherokee Bluff Middle School, a new elementary school, additions and renovations at East Hall High School, a Performing Arts Center at Johnson High School, upgrades to Learning Commons and facility renovations at various schools.
- 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 550 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.



University of North Georgia – Gainesville Campus

- 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, fully accredited and licensed Preschool through 2nd grade program, where children spend over 80% of their school day outdoors. Elachee Nature Science Center is the only SACS/Cognia-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, Interactive Distance Learning programs and Camp Elachee summer day camps.

TOURISM

Lanier Islands Legacy Lodge will host the 2021 Georgia Governor's Tourism Conference. 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 was selected as the host site for the 2026 NCAA Women's Rowing Championships, which will bring an estimated economic impact of \$2.5 million to Gainesville-Hall County. Lake Lanier Olympic Park also hosted the 2019 American Canoe Association's Sprint National Championships and the 2018 ICF Dragon Boat World Championships. Eight hundred athletes from 14 countries, 21 international officials and 500 volunteers participated in the 2018 event.
- Atlanta Botanical Gardens Gainesville is a 168-acre preserve and amphitheater. The newly opened Ada Mae Pass Ivester Children's Garden features 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 offering amenities for both families and corporate groups. Additionally, Margaritaville at Lanier Islands offers a variety of activities for everyone. Lanier Islands has announced plans to develop a new, 300-room hotel and 75,000 sq. ft. conference center. The \$155 million project will be located on the site of the former Pinelsle Resort.
- Elachee Nature Science Center serves as conservator-in-perpetuity for the 1,440-acre Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve, one of Georgia's largest protected green spaces, and includes 8 miles of hiking trails as well as natural history, ecology and live animal exhibits. Recent additions to Elachee's ecology exhibits are the Garden Trail, Trail of Trees and Georgia Pollinator Student Art exhibits. Elachee Nature Science Center is part of the 2,674-acre Chicopee Woods Area Park, which is comprised of the nature preserve, Hall County's agricultural center, Chicopee Woods Golf Course and 21 miles of mountain bike trails.
- 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 serves as the primary hospitality and media facility during racing events. The 24th Annual Motul Petit Le Mans will be held October 6-9, 2021.
- The Arts Council recently completed a 6,300 sq. ft. addition to the Smithgall Arts Center. The addition features an outdoor stage and pavilion, which provides covered seating for over 300 guests or concert space for more than 2,000 people.
- The Atlanta Falcons' 50-acre headquarters and world-class training facility is located in Flowery Branch.



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.

- 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.
- The Venue at Friendship Springs, a 40,000 sq. ft. multi-purpose event center, offers a 550-seat auditorium 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 on their campus in Gainesville. 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.

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!
- Vision 2030's education collaborative continues to concentrate on the Seventh Grade Career Path Fair to help local middle school students become aware of career opportunities in Gainesville and Hall County. The 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 is 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](#).



The Lost Wall (pictured above) is a newly recreated mural commemorating the original mural painted as a Gainesville Arts Council bicentennial project in 1974. Vision 2030 Public Art Committee and community volunteers completed the mural using the colors red, yellow, black and white to represent diversity and unity within the community.

HALLMARK 2020-2025

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 2020-2025.

- The HALLmark 2020-2025 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 Chamber's Economic Development, VISION 2030, Education and Leadership programs are funded through the HALLmark 2020-2025 Initiative.
- The Greater Hall Chamber's Workforce Development Task Force advocates to employers to hire high school students in an effort to increase their skills and build a sustainable workforce through work-based learning and the apprenticeship program.
- 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.



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