



Greater Hall Chamber Economic Development Year-End Report

Gainesville-Hall County remains a top performing metro in the Nation

The Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce Economic Development Council (EDC) reports 2024 year-end results of **12 new and expanding developments which will add 456 new jobs and \$212 million in new capital investment** to Gainesville-Hall County. Since January 1, 2020, a total of 64 new capital investments have been announced with more than 3,700 new jobs and \$1.75 billion in new capital investment. The fundamental economic drivers to the local economy indicate that 2025 will feature **better than average economic performance** for Gainesville-Hall County when compared to other metro areas in Georgia and the nation.

“The Gainesville-Hall County Metro Area’s success is a reflection of the commitment from business and elected leaders to work together to achieve remarkable things,” said **Tim McDonald**, President of Lanier Technical College and 2024-2025 Chair of the Chamber’s Economic Development Council. “Through the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce, community leadership work together on infrastructure, planning and investment to support business growth and economic development.”

Georgia has earned the #1 ranking for its business environment for an unprecedented eleventh consecutive year. During that time, **Gainesville-Hall County has been the Top Job producing Metropolitan Area in the State**. In 2024, *Area Development* magazine and *Site Selection* magazine named Gainesville-Hall County one of the Top Small Metros in the Nation for Job Creation and Investment. Similarly, *Forbes* magazine has rated Gainesville-Hall County as one of the “Best Small Places for Business & Careers” for the last nine years. Since 2015, the Chamber’s economic development program has assisted **169 new and expanding businesses, which have announced 9,000 jobs and \$3 billion in new capital investment**.

Most of the jobs and capital investment announced during 2024 are a direct result of the Chamber’s cornerstone effort to support existing business and industry. **Existing industry expansions** announced during the year include expansions at Auto Metal Direct, Power Services Group, Hydro, VDL Industries and Geveko Markings. Investments in new automation technologies and localizing the supply chain continue to be a trend for existing industry investments.



Swiss owned **medmix Healthcare US**, a medical device manufacturer, recently located to a new 300,000 square foot building in Oakwood South Industrial Park. **Tim Evans**, President & CEO of the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce, and **James Kirk** of medmix are pictured at the grand opening with representatives from Pattillo Industrial Real Estate, Cushman Wakefield, the City of Oakwood and the Greater Hall Chamber.

New corporate facilities announced in 2024 included CJ Logistics (Korea), ETI Lighting (China), medical device manufacturer Medmix US (Switzerland) and Mimaki USA (Japan). The new and expanded facility locations represent 1,200,000 square feet of new advanced manufacturing and US headquarters locations. Construction of the new locations began in 2024 and will continue into 2025. Additionally, many expansions announced

in 2023 were under construction in 2024, including Kubota, King’s Hawaiian, Eskimo Cold Storage, Mar-Jac and CJ Foodville. All these projects have either recently started operations or are on a timeline to complete construction and begin operations in the year ahead.

In early 2024, the **Georgia Ports Authority** issued a notice to proceed to its General Contractor, Carroll Daniel Construction and Simpson Trucking & Grading, to construct the new **Blue Ridge Connector (BRC)**. The new inland port

terminal, located north of Gainesville on Highway 365, will shorten the supply chain for container shipments between Northeast Georgia and global markets via a new rail connection to the Port of Savannah. Local contractors and subcontractors will play a leading role in the BRC's \$127 million construction throughout 2025, adding to the economic impact in the Gainesville-Hall County business community. The Georgia Ports Authority confirms the construction of the BRC is on schedule and will begin operations in early 2026.

International Investments were heavily featured in Gainesville-Hall County's recent expansions, including, Hydro (Norway), CJ Foodville (Korea), CJ Logistics (Korea), Medmix, (Switzerland), Geveko Markings (Denmark), Mimaki USA (Japan), ETI Lighting (China) and VDL Industries (Netherlands). Hall County is home to more than sixty internationally owned advanced manufacturing locations. Many of those locations also serve as a US or North American headquarters for the business. Japan and Germany are the top investor nations for employment and number of facilities. Georgia's largest Japanese owned manufacturing headquarters is Kubota Manufacturing of America with 3,500 employed in the company's manufacturing, research and development roles in the company's six Hall County locations.

Major commercial developments that opened in 2024 include the Midland Housing Development, the Solis Gainesville Apartments and Branch Properties' Limestone Marketplace anchored by a new Publix, Tupelo Honey, Suchero's, Super Chix and new medical office space. **Additional downtown developments** will be completed in 2025, including the Interactive Neighborhood for Kids' planned development in Oakwood and additional Downtown Flowery Branch investments.

The new year will begin with **approximately 2 million square feet of new industrial speculative building developments** in Gainesville, Oakwood, Flowery Branch and Buford available for occupancy in 2025. The region's largest industrial developers are actively building and leasing new space in Hall County, including Pattillo Industrial Real Estate, Logistics Property Company, Crow Holdings, Adams Properties and Presco Properties. New industrial investments underway in Hall County will total more than \$200 million in real property improvements. Many local firms are employed in the construction of these new industrial developments, and business activity for these firms is forecasted to remain strong well into the new year. The new industrial space will offer opportunities for new and expanding businesses to grow, add jobs, make new investments, and add to bottom-line business growth.

In 2025, infrastructure development on Highway 365, the Athens Highway corridor and the **new 1,300-acre Gainesville 85 Business Park** will be important to developing a future place to grow for expanding existing industries and new businesses. Planned infrastructure investments in 2025 include major investments in roads, water, sewer, gas, and electric distribution, expanding broadband access and investments in Hall County and Gainesville City Schools.

In the most recent 12-month data, the Georgia Department of Labor reports the Gainesville-Hall Metropolitan Area is finishing the year with an **unemployment rate at 2.6%**. The Gainesville-Hall County labor force is at an all-time high of 115,000 as of November 2024. More than one hundred employers have job openings posted on the Greater Hall Chamber's website seeking full and part-time employees.

"The Chamber provides a forum for the business community, educators and elected officials to work together on the issues that impact existing industries, small businesses, healthcare, retail and professional services," said **Tim Evans**, President & CEO of the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce.

The Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce hosted two job fairs in 2024 and will host a **Spring Job Fair & Career Expo at the Gainesville Civic Center on April 3, 2025**. The job fairs have proven to be beneficial to both employers and those seeking employment. Both the 2024 Spring and Fall Job Fairs each had more than 1,000 job seekers in attendance.

With a growing demand for talent and low unemployment in the Gainesville-Hall County Metropolitan Area, the Greater Hall Chamber, business leaders and educators **remain focused on Work Based Learning and Apprenticeships** for high-skilled career paths in demand by area businesses. During 2024, **Lanier Technical College reached a record enrollment of more than 6,900 students**. Highly skilled talent is much sought-after and Lanier Technical College has a 100% job placement rate for its graduates. The Chamber's Workforce Development Task Force is a partnership with Lanier Technical College, Hall County Schools, Gainesville City Schools, Brenau University, the University of North Georgia, and private businesses. The mission is to ensure businesses can acquire the talent and skills they need for sustainable growth and to replace highly skilled workers as they retire.

Healthcare Services in Gainesville-Hall County enhance quality of life and provide a direct economic impact for an estimated **1.8 million Georgia residents in the 18-county service area**. A 2023 study by the Greater Hall Chamber

focused on **483 regional healthcare providers located in Gainesville-Hall County employ 16,120 and provide \$1.26 billion in annual wages** in the community. A recent economic impact study confirmed the Northeast Georgia Health System has an **annual economic impact of \$7.5 billion on the region**. Northeast Georgia Health System (NGHS) will complete a **major \$600 million campus expansion** for the Northeast Georgia Medical Center (NGMC) Gainesville and an expansion to the NGMC Braselton campus estimated at \$565 million. NGMC's Graduate Medical Education (GME) Program, in its fifth year, has earned accreditation in Family Medicine, General Surgery, Internal Medicine, OB/GYN, Emergency Medicine, Psychiatry, Cardiovascular Disease and Hospice and Palliative Medicine. Adding to the growing healthcare education programs, Brenau University recently added a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies.

Some 99% percent of the 5,957 business establishments in Hall County are small businesses, using the U.S. Small Business Administration's definition of fewer than 500 employees. Approximately 94% of all businesses employ fewer than 50 people. Participation in the Chamber's monthly Small Business Seminars has grown in 2024 through virtual and hybrid meetings featuring programs on small business finance, hiring personnel, marketing and other topics important to small business. In its seventh year, the Chamber's "**Certified Small Business Partner**" recognition will be conferred to **13 small business owners** for participating in at least six Small Business Seminars.

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About Gainesville-Hall County

Gainesville-Hall County, Georgia is a vibrant and growing 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 future for business and industry. Gainesville-Hall County is home to 47 Fortune 500 firms, more than 330 manufacturing and processing concerns, and more than sixty international companies representing twenty-one foreign countries.

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