

# 2019-2021 Economic Development Report



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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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# 2019-2021 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT REPORT

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## FROM THE DIRECTOR

The following report covers 2019 through 2021. 2020 was a challenging year for most, but Barrow County, Georgia came out better and stronger than ever!

In 2019, HBO's *The Outsider* premiered and showcased Barrow County prominently throughout the run of the series. The Barrow Arts and Sciences Academy (BASA), a magnet school for grades 8-10, opened its doors for the first time this past fall and saw over 650+ students enrolled.

Our highlight of the year was the groundbreaking ceremony on the Spring Mountain Center at Park 53 in March of 2021. This project is projected to be a 45 million dollar investment and will offer 200 jobs to the local economy.

We hope you find the following pages informative. The future is bright in Barrow County.

*Lisa Maloof*

Director of Economic Development



# BUSINESS

This past year has been about landing and expanding!

The landing portion was the groundbreaking of the Spring Mountain Center at Park 53. The Spring Mountain Center (SMC) will manufacture and sell home and lifestyle products to customers across the world through its global distribution partners. SMC is a manufacturer for many top U.S. brands and their products have been among the bestsellers for The Home Depot, Wayfair, and other major retail outlets for the past decade. This project is projected to be a 45 million dollar investment that will provide 200 local jobs. Spring Mountain Center CEO Jie Xiang said "This will help lay a foundation to serve the next generation of customers and jobs here, both of which are vital to the health of the community, and this will lay the groundwork for other businesses to build on this infrastructure."

Expanding was front and center when the Stepan Company opened their new Agricultural Innovation Center near their existing manufacturing site. "[The Agricultural Innovation Center] is a testament to our commitment to safe and sustainable agriculture, our customers' growth, and to farmers worldwide who face increasing challenges that require new innovations," said Jason Keiper, Stepan Company Chief Technology and Sustainability Officer.

The Agricultural Innovation Center will include a greenhouse for live plant testing and research, a training center for formulation development, a Class II lab to support biological formulation development, state-of-the-art labs dedicated to liquid and dry formulation design, and a spray chamber for studying driftable fines in commercial formulations.

In 2019, Schütz Containers had an approximately 30 million dollar expansion that saw an additional blow mold line constructed at the Carl manufacturing facility.



# POPULATION & HOUSING

## Self-Responded by County

1	Fayette, Georgia	78.0%
2	Forsyth, Georgia	77.5%
3	Columbia, Georgia	74.9%
4	Paulding, Georgia	73.6%
5	Barrow, Georgia	72.9%
6	Coweta, Georgia	72.4%
7	Oconee, Georgia	72.1%
8	Walton, Georgia	71.7%
9	Gwinnett, Georgia	71.6%
10	Henry, Georgia	71.5%

Barrow County, Georgia is the place to be!

Since 2010, the population in Barrow County has risen 20% to 84,240 according to 2019 Census estimates.

#EveryoneCountsInBarrow was the theme used by the 2020 Barrow County Census Complete Count team. Barrow County finished 5th in the state of Georgia in self-response. By finishing so high in the self-response rate, Barrow County ensured that it would receive the most accurate allocation amounts in regards to roads, bridges, hospitals, and more.



Barrow County saw an impressive 935 building permits granted in 2020 and the growth is projected to continue! Thanks to forward-thinking leadership, Barrow County and its municipalities have emphasized the need for modern amenities (swim/tennis/playgrounds) in most new developments. A few examples are Auburn Station in Auburn (350 homes), phase II of Calgary Downs in Winder (80+ homes), and Cannon Trace in Winder (130 luxury townhomes)





# RETAIL & DINING



Let's eat! Barrow County has seen its dining options multiply over the past few years. Beginning in 2019, the old Peskin's Building in downtown Winder officially opened as Latin Flavors Steakhouse! With the Speakeasy located in the basement and The View providing rooftop dining, people are crossing county lines to be sipping brews and catching views atop one of Barrow's tallest buildings. Latin Flavors is a great compliment to our existing fine dining experiences at The Bistro off Broad and The Lobby. Also in Winder, Smokey Gringos Taco Bar & Feast26 opened to rave reviews.

The north and south sides of University Parkway has continued to expand with the addition of YourPie, True Vine Southern Kitchen, Panda Express, and Friends Grill. To counter all of that delicious food, Bodyplex opened its 25,000 square foot facility in 2020. Quick Lane Tire and Auto Center also opened their expansive new store near University Parkway.

In Braselton, Chateau Elan completed their 25 million dollar renewal. With a concept inspired by the surrounding landscape, the renewal includes a complete makeover of 251 guestrooms and 24 suites, the winery, and the resort lobby, as well as an update of the existing pool terrace and spa. Furthermore, four of the ten food and beverage outlets were entirely re-envisioned, from their interior design to the dining concepts and menus.

When traveling through the various Barrow County downtowns, you are likely to see many new and welcoming storefronts consisting of boutique clothing stores, mom-and-pop shops, antique stores, delicious local restaurants, and even a few hobby shops like Apalachee Cycle and TrainMaster Models.



# INFRASTRUCTURE

Orange cones have become the new indicator for growth in Barrow County! Over the past few years, a number of large infrastructure projects were completed and 2020 saw several new projects break ground.

The West Winder Bypass broke ground in 2018. This project consists of 4.972 miles of widening and reconstruction split into two phases. It begins at Matthews School Road extending to SR 211, and also begins at SR 316 extending to Matthews School Road. This project includes roughly 176,000 square yards of concrete paving, moving roughly 540,000 cubic yards of dirt, placing 40,500 tons of asphalt, constructing one bridge over a railroad that has 7,225 linear feet of beams, and constructing six culverts.

In 2021, the diamond urban interchange at SR 316 & SR 81 was completed. This 26.4 million dollar project consists of nearly 2.2 mi. of roads and will help in alleviating heavy traffic and reducing the number and severity of crashes. This project will allow State Route 316 traffic to continue free flow operations as a limited access corridor.

In 2020, crews broke ground for the new SR 53 and SR 316 Project. This project involves 1.65 miles of interchange construction on SR 316 at SR 53, which includes the construction of a bridge and approaches over SR 53.

The Tanners Bridge Wastewater Treatment Facility was completed in the spring of 2021. This state-of-the-art facility will have a capacity of 1.5 million gallons per day with the ability to expand further to 2 million gallons per day by making machinery and equipment changes within the building.

Along with the groundbreaking for the Spring Mountain Center, Park 53 has seen its access road extended and an additional tract graded.





# EDUCATION



Barrow B.O.L.D --- Building Our Learning Differently is the theme that guides the Barrow County School System. BCSS opened the doors to the Barrow Arts & Sciences Academy (BASA) this past fall and welcomed 650+ students. The \$18.8 million facility includes a student center, which houses the media center, cafeteria, and learning spaces, and the academic building for classrooms and lab spaces. In total, the school is over 114,000 square feet.



Students who are highly motivated in specific areas may choose to enroll in our Visual Art and Design, Performing Arts, Life and Health Science, or STEM magnet academies. These specialized programs will empower students to take a deep dive in their academy's theme in both their academic and elective courses.



In 2019 Winder-Barrow High School was the recipient of the prestigious UGA Director's Cup. The 10 students from Winder-Barrow High School that enrolled as first-year students at UGA in Fall 2018 semester achieved a 3.804 first-year cumulative GPA, higher than any other high school with 10 or more students from the 2018 entering class.



The Sims Academy of Innovation and Technology, our 87,000 square foot career academy that opened in 2014 has seen its programs increase in popularity. The Sims Academy focuses on developing workforce-ready students who can walk into high-paying industries such as robotics, culinary arts, broadcast video, marketing, welding, and automotive while building an entrepreneurship foundation. The SIMS Academy staff are proud that Barrow County leaders continue to use their facility as a conversational catalyst when they recruit new business and industry to the area.

# EDUCATION CONT.

As a part of the Workforce Development Campus at Austin Road, Lanier Technical College- Barrow Campus continues to prosper and grow!

Opening its doors in the fall of 2015, Lanier Technical College- Barrow Campus has been a key partner in developing a capable, skilled, and highly-trained workforce.

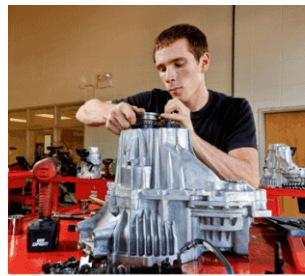
Their largest programs are Interdisciplinary Studies, Welding and Joining Technology, Automotive Technology, Early Childhood Education, and Mechatronics that supports advanced manufacturing.

Other programs of note offered at the Barrow Campus include Accounting, Building Automation Systems, Business Management, Business Technology, Criminal Justice Technology, Cybersecurity, Engineering Technology, Fire Science, Healthcare Assistant, Medical Assisting, Nurse Aid, PC Repair, and Wireless Engineering Technology.

This fall, Lanier Technical College- Barrow Campus is projected to hit over 500 students, which would be its second-largest enrollment ever.

Part of Lanier Technical College- Barrow Campus's key to success has been its strong partnership with the Barrow County School System. This fall, they are looking to have a record-breaking 185+ dual enrollment students.

Also coming this fall, Lanier Technical College- Barrow Campus will begin teaching some of the Dual Enrollment courses at Sims Academy while continuing to host the dual-enrolled welding and automotive classes.





# FILM, RECREATION & TOURISM



*Hollywood came to Barrow County in 2019 and used the Historic Courthouse and the Quality Foods (among other places) prominently in the HBO limited series The Outsider. Barrow County is an active member of the Camera Ready Georgia program.*

Tourism is increasingly becoming a driver of economic development for Barrow County. This past year saw Phase I of the Victor Lord Park SPLOST Expansion completed. Some of the additions to the 103.3-acre park are three multi-purpose athletic fields (one synthetic turf, two sodded grass), a grandstand/restroom building, an eight-court tennis complex, a dog park, and other amenities.

In January of 2021, the eight-court tennis complex at Victor Lord Park was completed and was the host venue for the Region 8AAAAA Boys & Girls District tennis tournament.

Due to the expanded parking and additional fields, it is not uncommon to find Victor Lord Park bustling with activity on any given weekend. Travel baseball, softball, football, and local youth leagues all contribute to the local economy when games are hosted at Victor Lord Park





# FILM, RECREATION & TOURISM CONT.

In 2019, Fort Yargo State Park cut the ribbon on the new 5,859-square-foot Welcome Center. The palatial structure is now the first stop for visitors and provides a view of the lake and namesake fort. It includes a reception area for check-in, meeting space, snacks, and beverages. A relaxing patio offers a fire pit and lake view, and the gift shop is filled with souvenirs, nature-themed toys and books, camping supplies, decorative items, jewelry, local foods, and more. Additionally, the park's main entrance has been moved a half-mile south on Hwy. 81 to improve safety and access.



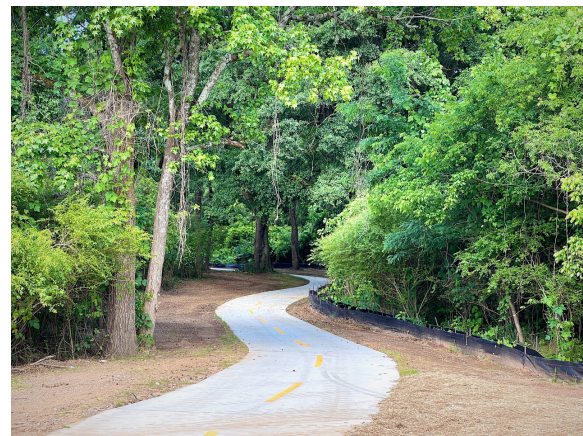
Fort Yargo is Georgia's seventh most-visited state park, offering hiking, biking, fishing, lake swimming, camping, cabin rental, disc golf, and numerous other outdoor activities. It generates \$41 million in economic impact for the community and is Barrow County's top tourist attraction.



In 2019, the Perry Rainey Center in Auburn officially opened to the public. This century-old building, which used to be a college and a garment factory, underwent major renovations after sitting vacant since 2007. The basement houses a pair of local artists and the upper floor is used as a banquet hall. Adult Literacy Barrow and Lanier Technical College are teaching GED, Spanish GED, and ESL classes at the center as well.



2021 saw the completion of both the newly renovated Jug Tavern Park, with its new landscaping and dual amphitheaters, and the Wilkins Greenway Trail. The Wilkins Greenway Trail is a paved .98 mile trail that connects the Fort Yargo Welcome Center to Lee Street in downtown Winder.



On any given weekend, you will find great live entertainment at the Innovation Amphitheatre, where bands such as The Marshall Tucker Band have rocked the house! If that's not enough, you can groove at the Downtown Live! Summer Concert Series at the Jackson St. Amphitheater in Winder.



# BARROW COUNTY BY THE NUMBERS

(ACCORDING TO THE MOST RECENT DATA AVAILABLE)



**3.3%**

Unemployment Rate



**\$209,000**

Median price of homes sold



**75.6%**

Homeownership percentage



**\$62,345**

Median Household Income



**35**

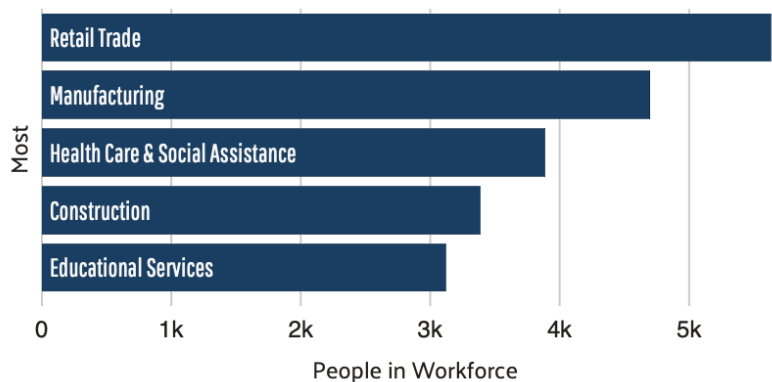
Average Age of Barrow County residents



**41,352**

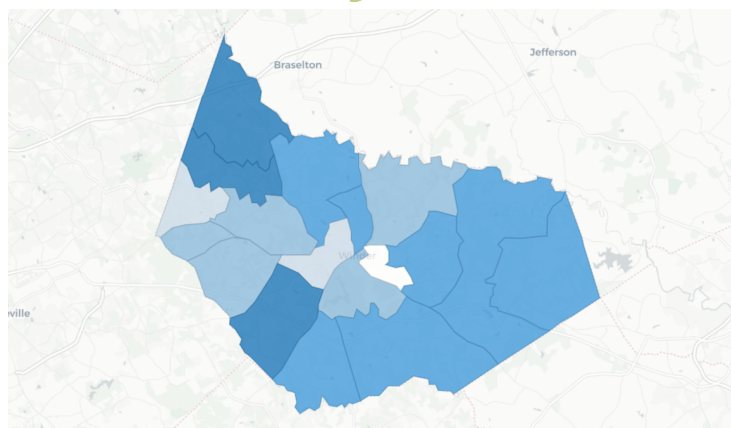
Number of workers in labor force

## Employment by Industry



2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | **2019**

## Income by Location



Median Household Income

Income Range	Color
\$30.3k - \$45.4k	Lightest Blue
\$45.5k - \$54.4k	Light Blue
\$54.4k - \$62.1k	Medium Blue
\$62.2k - \$73.8k	Dark Blue
\$73.9k+	Darkest Blue

2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | **2019**

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