

# Johns Creek Strategic Economic Development Plan: Summary

January 2021

## Purpose

The Strategic Economic Development Plan (SEDP) serves as the roadmap for the John Creek's economic development efforts with the primary goals of sustaining and increasing the City's tax base, increasing new private and corporate investments, increasing opportunities for public/private partnerships, creating jobs in appropriate business sectors and maximizing sustainable economic growth and vitality. The City contracted with Strategic Planning Group, Inc., to work with City leaders, residents and the business community to construct this plan. The plan was developed throughout 2014-2015 and approved by City Council in February 2016.

## Research

The City was established in 2006 and has consistently had a growing resident base from a base of 80,978 at the time of this plan's publication to 83,999 in 2019. Residents are highly educated (61% with a college degree or higher) and maintains the highest median income of the North Fulton area (\$109,221 median income in 2015) and the highest percentage of owner-occupied homes. The city is racial diverse with the largest Asian community of the North Fulton area.

Johns Creek currently has a total of 1,678 commercial businesses including 934 home-based businesses. The vast majority of businesses are small businesses with the majority of businesses reporting less than 4 employees in 2015. Most of the city's employment falls within the service and retail sectors.

Johns Creek has the smallest business and employee base of the North Fulton communities. Of the City's population, only 2,171 residents live and work within the community; approximately 29,000 residents commute outside the City for employment while only 17,000 individuals commute to Johns Creek for employment within the City.

Johns Creek represents only 3% of the office space available in the North Fulton market and .03% of office space in the Atlanta metro market. Available space of Class A properties is currently above 25% with the recent vacancy of the State Farm Regional Headquarters.

Within the retail market, Johns Creek lies within the primary and/or secondary markets of seven major regional retail centers: Avalon, Gwinnett Place Mall, Mall of Georgia, North Point Mall, Perimeter Mall, the Forum and the Collection at Forsyth. This position realizes a major gap of total retail, eating and drinking places within the city, but provides a mass surplus within the 15-mile region; however, there are numerous segments of the market that contain major gaps and are ripe for development.

Johns Creek's primary assets are its quality of life and reputation as one of the highest income and amenity communities in Atlanta, if not the South- east. Equally important to the city's economic development efforts is the Technology Park at Johns Creek, which is home to financial and data service providers.

# Recommendations

The following are recommended as the primary target industries:

- High Technology Industries
- Information Technology
- Software
- Financial Services
- Medical Technology
- Professional Services

Because of Johns Creek’s existing office vacancies and office turnover rate, the plan recommends targeting industries that are primarily those businesses that occupy office space.

The plan recommends four levels or platforms to increase employment opportunities within the city.

1. Business Recruitment: Primary targeted business sectors that are prime users of office space
2. Business Retention: Working with existing businesses as well as commercial real estate brokers to retain existing businesses and attract regional business not identified as “targets” but nonetheless are suited to fill vacancies as they become available
3. Business Expansion: Working with existing international companies (or their parent companies) to bring more of their business portfolio to the city and/or to identify linked businesses (forward and backward linked businesses) that may relocate due to their working relationships with those primary firms.
4. Retail Business: Sustain and expand the city’s retail network.

# Goals & Objectives

Based on the research and recommendations within the SEDP, the following goals, objectives and strategies were established as the guide for economic development in the City of Johns Creek through 2021 (see full plan for objectives and strategies):

- GOAL 1: Promote City Image, Climate and Brand for Economic Development**
- GOAL 2: Develop Infrastructure for Balanced Growth**
- GOAL 3: Position the City for Economic Development**
- GOAL 4: Develop Product – Land and Buildings**
- GOAL 5: Maintain Quality of Life through Community Development**

# Read the Full Plan

<https://www.johnscreekga.gov/businesses/economicdevelopment/strategic-economic-development-plan>