

MEAG POWER **current** COMMUNITIES

GRIFFIN, GEORGIA

Kenny Smith
City Manager
770.229.6425

Dick Morrow
Mayor
770.412.7081

David Luckie
Director of Economic Development
770.412.9200

www.cityofgriffin.com



GRIFFIN

Business Not As Usual

The corporate roster in Griffin and Spalding County spans paper, tires, engine and automotive manufacturers, healthcare, textiles and now, rice vinegar. A Japanese firm, Marukan, has chosen Griffin as its first East Coast venture and will begin production in 2017. Marukan began brewing rice vinegar in Japan in 1649 – over 300 years ago – and has been in continuous operation since then. Marukan will join two other Japanese firms in The Lakes at Green Valley business park.

Another long-time industry making Griffin home is 1888 Mills. The firm has actually manufactured towels since 1888, well over 100 years, and today is among the last remaining towel manufacturing enterprises in the country. Presently, 1888 Mills employs over 200 people, but in 2014, the company announced a 500,000 square-foot expansion, a rare announcement in the U.S. textile industry.

There's no doubt Griffin's business community is evolving into an interesting mix of homegrown traditions coupled with influences from around the globe. It's not business as usual, but for this Georgia community, it is very special.

*A Diverse, Evolving
Business Community*





FAST FACTS GRIFFIN

POPULATION: 23,643, Spalding County 63,871

UTILITIES: Electricity, water, wastewater, storm water and solid waste

TRANSPORTATION: Griffin is strategically located just south of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport on Georgia Highway 16, which bisects Interstate 75. Rail is provided by Norfolk Southern Railway.

NOTABLE EMPLOYERS:

- 1888 Mills, LLC – textile manufacturer for retail and hospitality markets
- Bandag Inc. – tire manufacturer
- Caterpillar Inc. – manufacturer of construction equipment and engines
- Norcom, Inc. – paper manufacturer
- Otsuka Chemical America, Inc. – brake pad parts manufacturer
- Spalding Regional Hospital – healthcare
- Toppan USA, Inc. – packaging barrier film
- University of Georgia – education

“An ‘All In’ philosophy is working in our community. Even beyond county lines, we build collaboration. Newcomer Dollar General is bringing a 1,000,000 square-foot distribution center here that spans two counties. Both Spalding and Butts Counties as well as Griffin will all benefit from this retailer’s presence.”

– Mayor Dick Morrow

- Early residents of Griffin were mostly cotton farmers who needed a way to get goods to the market in Macon. The answer was tracks, rails and locomotion. In 1842, the first steam engine came through Griffin.
- The city was named for Lewis Lawrence Griffin, who was the president of the Monroe Railroad.
- Doc (John Henry) Holliday of the famous Arizona shoot-out at the O.K. Corral was born in Griffin in 1851. Educated in dentistry, he left Georgia for the drier climates of the West to help his tuberculosis. He died in Colorado in 1887.
- The Griffin Water Department recently inspired young engineers with its first model water tower competition among teams of city school 6th graders. The towers were judged on structural and hydraulic efficiency and design ingenuity, and the program scored high on engaging young people in municipal operations.
- Main Street sponsors a “Taste of Downtown” twice a year, a 4th of July Parade, Christmas Open House and an antique arts and crafts fair each October that showcases downtown Griffin.

“All In” FOR GRIFFIN

The good news in Griffin, Georgia, seems to be nonstop. Projects, public and private, are humming. Whether it is the Archway collaboration, the city’s Main Street program or industry recruitment, Griffin leaders and volunteers are “All In” for development in their community.

In early 2016, Griffin completed its second Archway Partnership retreat. Once a community is selected for the University of Georgia (UGA) Archway Partnership, an Archway professional moves in to help facilitate community brainstorming and project implementation. Goals were set at the winter retreat in five areas, with education and workforce development front and center. The city, county and board of education anted up the dollars to fund this initiative and representatives from across the community are involved.

One key education initiative is the UGA Student Learning Center. The support of the local community – as evidenced by the funding provided for the new center through a special purpose local option sales tax (SPLOST) – allows Griffin/Spalding County to transform a university research facility into a \$10 million institution for student programs and courses of study. This step viewed by many is core to workforce development.

Projects in downtown Griffin have citizens equally enthused. Solomon Park is a proposed 3.2-acre green space that will feature a 2,500-person amphitheater, a large fountain, food truck pads and vendor areas for special events. Local engineers provided pro bono design services, a \$2 million private fundraiser is underway, and taxpayers have approved the park to receive SPLOST dollars.

“My early interest in Main Street began with architecture, but I soon realized the power of the Main Street program as an economic engine for our city,” explains Daa’ood Amin, local businessman and chairman of the Main Street Board.

Another civic and business leader, Chuck Copeland, chairman of the local industrial development authority, is often credited for rallying support for the SPLOST referendum that enabled the purchase of 600 acres of land

for The Lakes at Green Valley, a mixed-use “green” industrial park that has been very successful in attracting new business. The park includes six lakes, and approximately one third of the park will remain uncut. The park concept also encourages tenants to think green in their construction and operations.

Thinking green has extended to city facilities, too, and can be seen in the construction of the new utility operations facilities. The campus of structures was built to LEED standards, which includes roof skylights that allow natural light to illuminate certain workspaces.

Griffin municipal leadership, Mayor Dick Morrow and City Manager Kenny Smith, have built an “All In” team culture in city government focused on serving residents, educational institutions and businesses. They have re-engineered city departments, identified operational efficiencies, rebuilt dated utility infrastructure and garnered citizen feedback to craft a new logo for city branding efforts. In Griffin, “All In” is all about making the city and its neighboring areas all better.



Rendering of Solomon Park





Old Coca-Cola Bottling Company building



Entrance to Sun City Peachtree, active adult community

More About HOMETOWN GRIFFIN

- The Griffin Coca-Cola Bottling Company is a local landmark on East Taylor Street. In the plant's final year of production in 1956, the bottling company produced almost 100,000 gallons of soda pop. Today, the facility is home to several businesses, retail shops and a restaurant.
- Sun City Peachtree, the first Sun City active adult community in Georgia, is still active in Griffin and boasts 800 homes.
- Griffin Museum contains an impressive array of Griffin artifacts and memorabilia dating from as far back as the mid-1800s. There are displays of medical, dental and pharmaceutical supplies and equipment going back to the days of the medical colleges as well as cotton industry equipment from the turn of the century.
- Stonewall Confederate Cemetery is located on part of a plot given as a burial site by General Lewis Lawrence Griffin in 1840. Several hundred Confederates and one Union soldier are buried here.
- A city listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Griffin has grown from a railroad "boomtown" to a thriving metro Atlanta suburb. Griffin features a remarkably intact old downtown district that is continually experiencing streetscape beautification.