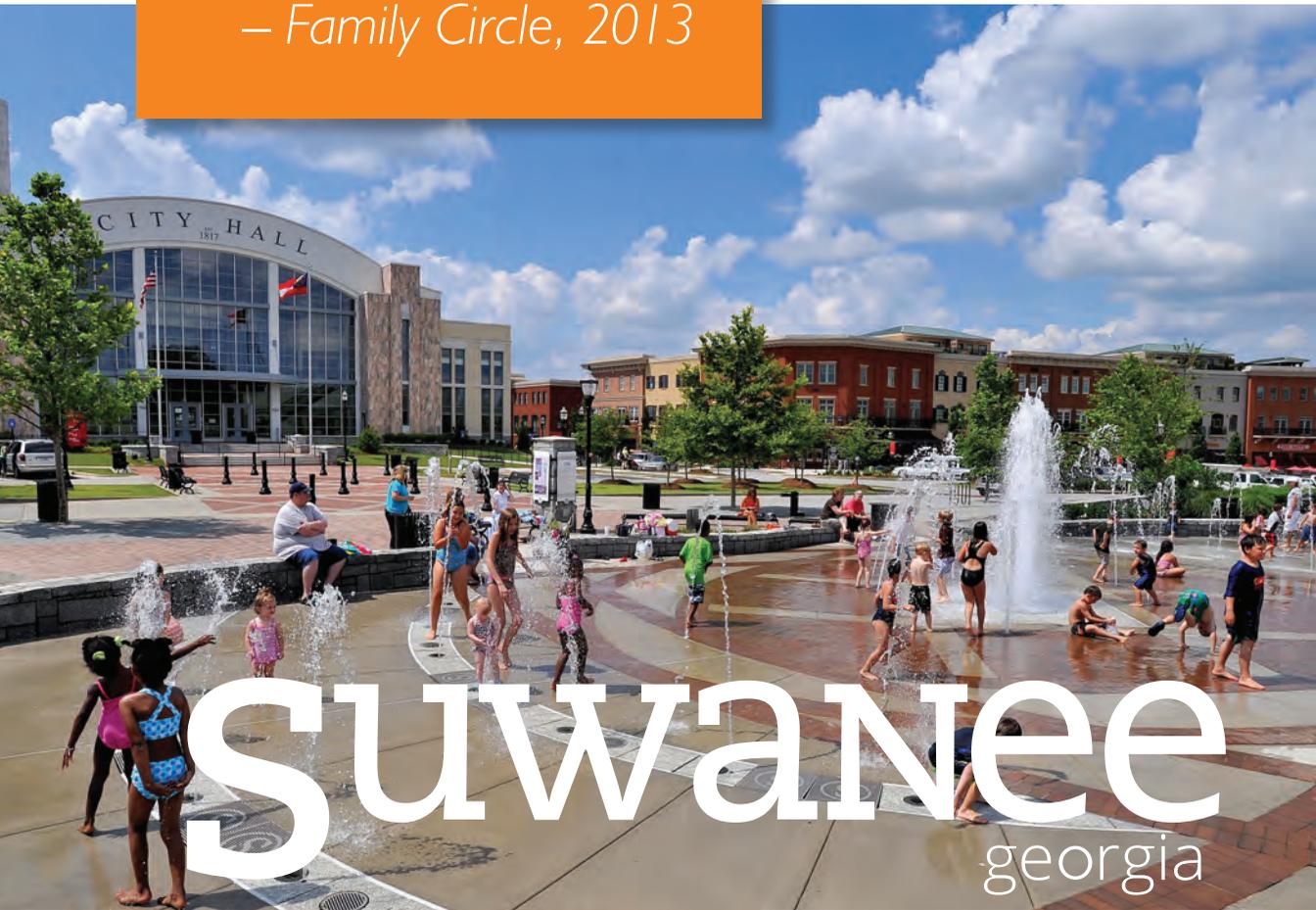


One of '10 best  
towns for families'  
– *Family Circle, 2013*



# Suwanee

georgia

**Play hard.  
Live well.  
Smile more!**

**99%** of surveyed residents  
say Suwanee is a cool  
place to live. Find out why . . . ▶





**Distinctive parks. Great neighborhoods. Easy access to Atlanta, Lake Lanier, and the North Georgia mountains. Crowd-pleasing events. A unique flair for arts and culture. Suwanee has become well-known for doing things right and being a great place to live.**



Cover photo by David Douglas

Photo by Koko Warner

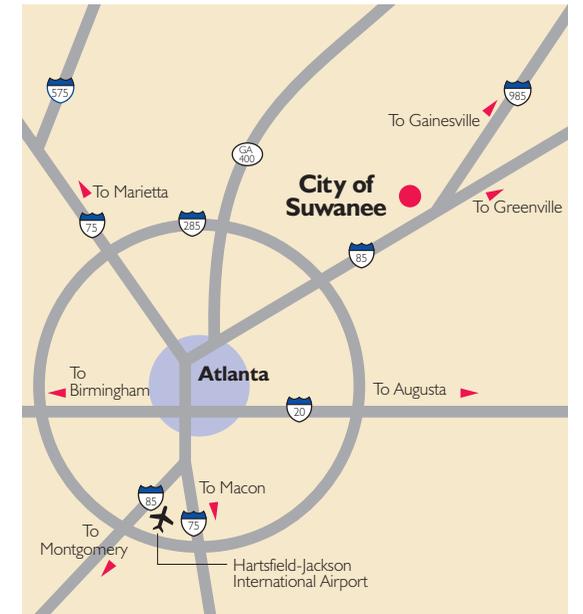
Suwanee has won numerous awards and built a regional reputation for efforts that underscore its commitment to maintaining an outstanding quality of life for residents.

Suwanee's youngest residents are served by the Gwinnett County Public Schools system, the largest in the state and regarded as one of the finest in the nation. We have more than 500 acres of parkland, including a community-built playground, walking and biking trails, and community garden. Our iconic Town Center is our community's "front yard" where residents and others from throughout the metro area gather for concerts and festivals, to shop and eat, or simply to relax and play. And, the City is working to embrace public art as yet another means to make Suwanee distinctive and enhance quality of life.

Whether you're passing through, spending a few days, or thinking about moving in, welcome to Suwanee, Georgia – a community where you can play hard...live well...and smile more.

### Location, location, location

Long considered one of the hottest places to live in the vibrant Atlanta region, Suwanee has been ranked in recent years by top national publications – such as *Money* and *Family Circle* magazines as well as Kiplinger.com – as one of the best places in the U.S. to call home. Our residents enjoy the charm of small-town living while having access to a wide array of big-city cultural amenities and professional sporting events. And outdoor adventures are available in the north Georgia mountains and nearby lakes. Atlanta is a straight 30-mile shot down Interstate 85, and Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, one of the world's busiest, is about 45 minutes away. This convenient access is a boon to our businesses and residents as well.



### Award-winning Suwanee

In many ways, our community has created its own good fortune through progressive visioning, innovative planning, and hard work. Over the past decade, Suwanee has won more than 100 state, regional, and national awards and recognitions for excellence in community policing, parks, events, community involvement, economic development, financial reporting, marketing, and planning.

### A well-trodden welcome mat

A vibrant, just-the-right-size community of about 16,000, Suwanee was not so long ago considered a sleepy little place that marked the northern terminus of Interstate 85. The City's population grew from 2,412 in 1990 to 8,725 in 2000. And 2010 Census data indicates that, despite the nation's sluggish economy in the late 2000s, Suwanee continues to grow – and to grow more diverse with nearly one-third of the community's 2010 population of 15,355 representing minority cultures.



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### Home sweet home

Homebuyers from other parts of the country generally are surprised at how far their housing dollar can stretch in Suwanee. The community offers a variety of housing choices, in single- and multi-family options, that fit an array of lifestyles, including walkable, accessible traditional neighborhood designs and conventional subdivisions complete with cul-de-sacs. Based on county tax assessments, Suwanee's 2012 median home value was \$216,200.

**“Town Center [provides] a much-needed common space of interest and character. . . . [It’s] a great brand that other communities recognize and respect. With this, Suwanee has become less about where my family has a house and more about where we make our home.”**

— Jeff Spence

It's not only national publications that are finding Suwanee an excellent place to live – our residents say that they love living here, too. In a recent National Citizen Survey (2012), 99 percent of surveyed residents rated Suwanee as an excellent or good place to live while 97 percent gave thumbs up to the City's overall quality of life.



### Educational excellence

Long regarded as one of the finest K-12 programs in the Southeast, the Gwinnett County Schools system brought home the largest national education award in the country when it received the 2010 Broad Prize for demonstrating strong student achievement while narrowing achievement gaps.

Suwanee-area residents are served by 10 Gwinnett County elementary, middle, and high schools. Suwanee's schools are the best of the best as demonstrated by student test scores and school awards and honors. Both North Gwinnett and Peachtree Ridge high schools have been recognized as Advanced Placement Merit Schools with at least 20 percent of students taking AP exams. And both schools are regularly included in *Newsweek's* list of best 1,000 high schools in the country.

**“The town’s highly regarded schools make it a particularly good place for raising children. . . .**

The City itself boasts a massive public playground called PlayTown and a downtown fountain called Big Splash, where kids are encouraged to play.”

— Kiplinger.com





**“This weekend I had my daughter’s 4th birthday at White Street Park and I couldn’t have been more pleased. . . . The staff and gardeners I encountered were so friendly, and the facility is so perfect that I had to send a note to tell the City thank you for building it and providing it for the community. We had friends from all over metro Atlanta who went on and on about how wonderful it was. It really is such a blessing to the community and residents.”**

— Nicole Puckett

### Come play with us

Through our award-winning parks and open space initiative, Suwanee has taken “play” to a whole new level. Over the past decade, Suwanee created six new parks, each of which provides unique recreational opportunities for the community:

- **PlayTown Suwanee** – a literary-themed, community-built super playground on Main Street
- **Sims Lake Park** – 61 idyllic acres featuring a lake, playground, and multipurpose trail
- **Suwanee Creek Greenway** – a four-mile multipurpose pathway, with multiple access points, that meanders through woods, wetlands, and wildlife habitats
- **Suwanee Creek Park** – an 85-acre passive and natural refuge that serves as the trailhead for the Suwanee Creek Greenway
- **Town Center Park** – a 10-acre urban park that functions as our community gathering place and features a 1,500-square-foot performance stage and large interactive fountain
- **White Street Park** – this quaint park is home to Harvest Farm Community Garden, a serene half-mile walking trail, and stunning butterfly garden

Also located in Suwanee, Gwinnett County’s George Pierce Park is a 304-acre active recreational area that includes trails as well as numerous football, baseball, softball, and soccer fields where area youth – and adults – mix it up in a variety of recreational and competitive leagues.

### Discover Downtown Suwanee

When you visit downtown Suwanee, you might want to bring along a towel. . . picnic basket. . . iPod. . . reading glasses. . . appetite. . . dancing shoes. . . and a sense of fun. Downtown Suwanee is a delightful juxtaposition of old and new that includes four fabulous parks, the public library, and a number of shops and restaurants. The annual Suwanee SculpTour, a walkable public art encounter, also takes place in downtown Suwanee.

A bit of a split personality, downtown Suwanee includes the vibrant, mixed-use Town Center and the charming, historic Old Town area. Town Center functions as the heart of the Suwanee community and our activity center. City Hall and an array of shops, restaurants, services, and residences surround Town Center Park. In the Old Town area, historic homes, churches, and storefronts date back as far as the 1870s. A pedestrian tunnel and specialized crosswalk connect these two areas.

### Eventful Suwanee

Town Center is home to most of Suwanee’s community events, including concerts, festivals, outdoor movies, food truck evenings, and the farmers market. Over the past several years, many top bands have performed free concerts in Suwanee, including Atlanta Rhythm Section, Better Than Ezra, Little River Band, Sister Hazel, Tonic, Vertical Horizon, and the Wailers. From spring through the fall, the City hosts nearly 40 events as a means to build and maintain a sense of close-knit community.

Suwanee boasts about 100 restaurants and is located in the midst of Gwinnett County’s best shopping. The Mall of Georgia and Sugarloaf Mills are just up or down, respectively, one interstate exit from Suwanee. The 13,000-seat Gwinnett Arena, which plays host to some of the country’s hottest performers and premier sporting events, is only 10 minutes away as is Coolray



Photo by Dave Gillette

Field, home to the AAA Gwinnett Braves. Suwanee is fortunate to have in its backyard the Suwanee Sports Academy, a 100,000-square foot training and competition facility that includes seven NBA-regulation basketball courts and 11 volleyball courts.

The Atlanta area is home to numerous outstanding golf courses, and a few of the very best are located in or near Suwanee, including Bear’s Best Atlanta, ranked by *Golf Magazine* as one of the “top 10 courses you can play in America.” And no other place around the country serves up tennis like the Atlanta area, where most neighborhoods have several teams for a variety of age and ability levels. For children, neighborhood swim teams provide a splash of summer fun and competition.

### Service with a smile

The City of Suwanee's approximately 100 staff members strive to provide exemplary service on a consistent basis and to live up to the staff motto to "exceed expectations." Among the services provided by the City of Suwanee are police protection, planning, inspections, community and economic development, street and sidewalk maintenance, community events, litter control, grounds maintenance, public works, code enforcement, parks, and a limited water system.

Internationally accredited, Suwanee's Police Department prides itself on maintaining an extremely safe

community as well as implementing a community-policing philosophy. Officers are assigned as liaisons to each of Suwanee's neighborhoods, where they work closely alongside homeowners to maintain a high quality of life and proactively address areas of concern.

### Anything but business as usual

Suwanee is a great "home" for businesses, too. Generally, the cost of doing business in Gwinnett County and Georgia is less than many other parts of the country. Georgia boasts low real estate costs, property tax rate, and energy costs, and the City of

Suwanee offers 100 percent Freeport tax exemption for manufacturers and distributors. We're happy to work with businesses to ensure that they are aware of varied local, county, and state financial incentives.

Beyond financial incentives, Suwanee strives to create a vibrant community where people will want to live – and work.

### An economic powerhouse

Much of Suwanee's vibrancy can be attributed to the economic health of the metro Atlanta area and Gwinnett County in particular. Boasting the strongest private-sector job performance in metro Atlanta over the past decade, Gwinnett County, with a population of more than 800,000, has emerged as the area's leading hub for technology, bioscience, and innovative companies of the future. Indeed, Gwinnett County was recently ranked ninth in a Money magazine list of "Where the Jobs Are."

Through the economic downturn of the late 2000s, Gwinnett County maintained its AAA bond rating, and the City of Suwanee's was actually upgraded to

**"My wife and I have so much Suwanee pride.** We

have enjoyed the parks, shops, restaurants, events, and Greenway. We love everything about this town!"

– Joseph Dyer

AA+. Also, during that same time period, Suwanee had one of the lowest unemployment rates, ranging from 3-4 percent at a time when state and national unemployment rates were at about 9 percent.

The City of Suwanee works closely with the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce to bring new business opportunities and jobs to the community.



Photo by Koko Warner



**"The [ride-along] officer was wonderful.**

Respectful, accommodating, and with great integrity, passion, and professionalism for what they do."

– 2012 Citizens Police Academy participant in an evaluation of the program



Photo by Koko Warner

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# Welcome to Suwanee

As Suwanee continues to grow, our community will work to maintain its small-town charm, its sense of community, and its parks and open spaces. We welcome you to find out more about Suwanee, ongoing initiatives, implementation of "big ideas" from the 20/20 Vision strategic plan, and upcoming events at [suwanee.com](http://suwanee.com).

## Suwanee by the numbers

### POPULATION

1980	1,026
1990	2,412
2000	8,725
2010	15,355
2020 (projected)	23,453

### POPULATION BY RACE CLASSIFICATION

White	67.4%
Asian	18%
African-American	10.8%
Other	3.8%

6.7% of the population identifies as Hispanic or Latino by origin of any race.

### NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS

6,440 (Sept. 2012 estimate)

### HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Median Household Income \$83,093  
(2006-10 American Community Survey)

### AGE

Median Age 36.8

### EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

More than half (52.5%) of Suwanee residents (25 and older) have a bachelor's or more advanced educational degree. 94.8% of residents (2010 figures) have a high school diploma.

### LAND AREA

About 11 square miles



**“Since 1997, I have watched Suwanee grow from a small residential area**

to a forward-thinking, thriving community... When you throw in a low crime rate, affordable housing, and opportunities in and around the community to get involved, you find yourself in an area not only where you want to raise your kids, but also where they can grow as individuals.”

— Angie O'Farrell



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[SUWANEE.COM](http://SUWANEE.COM)



Photo by R. Scott Quady



Photo by David Douglas



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