Business Ready and Tourist Ready

SANDERSVILLE, GEORGIA
James W. Andrews – Mayor
Judy McCorkle – City Administrator
478-552-2525
www.sandersville.net

SANDERSVILLE
Rolling Out the Red Carpet

Sandersville is busy inviting businesses and tourists to the city. The recent merger of two of Georgia’s technical schools into the Oconee Fall Line Technical College brings the strength of two small schools into one and assures companies that Sandersville is ready with Quick Start learning programs for industries that want an educated workforce. Also, investments are being made to ensure the city’s infrastructure is ready for economic growth, including a new terminal building and an expanded runway at the airport with the potential to serve corporate aircraft. And, to serve the transportation needs of its businesses, there is the Sandersville Railroad Company, a privately owned short line that helps with shipping goods from numerous rail-served industrial properties in the community.

Tourists are being attracted to Sandersville as the city takes its historical landmarks and natural beauty to market. Civil War points of interest and a Victorian cemetery hold lots of history to be explored. Indeed, a University of Georgia cartography graduate documented all the historically significant points in the county, including over 300 cemeteries. Additionally, just 14 miles north of Sandersville is Hamburg State Park with a 225-acre lake, trailer and camping sites, as well as a 1921 water-powered operational gristmill.

Businesses and tourists are invited to take advantage of all Sandersville has to offer.
**FAST FACTS**

**SANDERSVILLE**

**POPULATION:** 5,912

**COUNTY:** Washington – Population 28,187

**UTILITIES:** Electricity, water, sewer, telecom and solid waste

**TRANSPORTATION:** Sandersville is 40 miles from Interstate 16, 47 miles from Interstate 20 and is located on State Routes 15, 242, 88 and 24 that includes the Fall Line Freeway, a four-lane connector between Columbus and Augusta.

**NOTABLE EMPLOYERS:**
- American Railcar Industries
- Burgess Pigment Company
- Lamson Pipe Company/AD Technologies
- Thiele Kaolin Company
- Washington County Board of Education
- Washington County Regional Medical Center

“The innovative partnerships we have formed to help Sandersville grow are already showing results. Our town is rooted in old-time values but has the infrastructure to meet the needs of businesses that can be run locally and operate globally.”

– Mayor Jimmy Andrew

**History:** Settled in 1783 by Revolutionary War veterans, the town grew up around the intersection of two Creek Indian trails. The city’s original name was Saundersville, for Mr. M. Saunders, a local storeowner. In 1796, the town was made the county seat of Washington County.

**Historical Plates:** Plates depicting the history of Georgia, the state’s official plates, were designed by a Sandersville native and are made in England by Wedgwood. The kaolin clay is shipped to England for production.

**Events:** The International Kaolin Festival, first held in 1956, is an annual fall event with arts and crafts, music, food and a parade.

**Georgia Governors:** Three of Georgia’s governors called Washington County home: Jared Irwin, Thomas W. Hardwick and Nathan Deal.

**Satellite Campus:** Milledgeville’s Georgia Military College has created an extension in Sandersville.

**Geology:** The “Fall Line” is a geological boundary approximately 20 miles wide that runs northeastward through Sandersville. Clay soils, such as kaolin, are found north of the line and sandy soils are to the south of the line.
MINING OF A DIFFERENT SORT IN SANDERSVILLE

Sandersville’s economy has been uniquely defined by the mining of kaolin, a white, alumina-silicate clay used in hundreds of products ranging from paper to cosmetics to the nose cones of rockets. For decades, Sandersville kaolin was Georgia’s largest volume export and while more than 1,500 local jobs, directly and indirectly, come from this industry today, a South American high-grade kaolin has emerged as a major competitor.

But Sandersville is not daunted by competition. The leadership from city council, local business, education and county management is mining all of the city’s resources and assets for economic prosperity.

With a Regional Medical Center based in Sandersville, the community partnered with the Georgia Rural Medical Scholar Program to expand its draw of medical students for clinical rotations at the hospital. This experience allows new doctors a chance to live and work in the community. Additionally, through a partnership with Darton College in Albany, The University of Georgia Archway Partnership Program fosters a one-year nursing program whereby a licensed practical nurse can become a registered nurse.

An innovative city/county partnership had a great success when it lured the Shared Services Center for the University System of Georgia’s colleges and universities to its business park. This facility consolidates the university system’s individual business functions, such as payroll, into one back office that serves all 35 degree-granting institutions. The City of Sandersville joined with Washington County to construct a 21,000-square-foot office complex for the Center creating 50 jobs and potential to grow if more financial functions are gained from the University System.

Also, looking ahead is a reorganized Sandersville Downtown Development Authority. They are addressing the city’s overall retail mix and the potential for second-floor loft space above existing merchants in the core commercial district. The city also plans ongoing investments in water, sewer, electricity and roads, as well as the new airport to ensure available infrastructure for economic expansion.

High on the community’s radar is a pending massive construction project that will create potential for jobs and increase the local tax digest. The Plant Washington project, an 850-megawatt, coal-fired power plant, is in the first stages of EPD approval for construction. The project will ultimately provide electricity for Georgia electric cooperatives.

Sandersville leaders are experts at the mining business and not just for kaolin. They have assets within the city’s bedrock that are just waiting to surface.

Kaolin mining remains part of the growing economic base.

The business park welcomes new opportunities for the community.
The Sandersville Brown House Museum is an 1852 home that Union General W. T. Sherman used as an overnight headquarters during his infamous March to the Sea. When Sherman reached the town and learned of a skirmish and execution of Federal prisoners, he decided to burn the town of 500 to the ground. But instead, Sherman was convinced to burn only the courthouse, downtown district and four cotton warehouses, and destroy some rail track.

The Old City Cemetery in Sandersville was the site of a Civil War skirmish and holds 81 Civil War gravesites. The cemetery is featured in the Georgia Civil War Heartland Trail, a Civil War driving tour designated by the state of Georgia tourism initiative.

Victorian-era cemeteries often had headstones within the cemetery that were decorated with ornate doves, flowers, and other artistic and religious symbols. Sandersville wants to promote the Victorian-era model where cemeteries were not places of gloom, but rather lovely parks where families would go to visit the final resting places of loved ones and enjoy the setting.