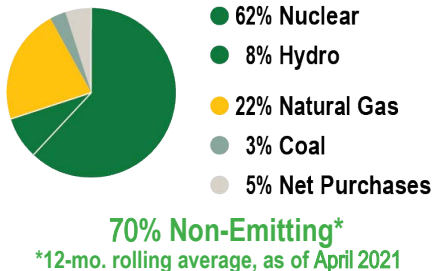


## STAYING current

### MEAG Power Delivered Energy



### Georgia Now a Top-10 Exporter

Despite exports falling from 2019 levels due to the pandemic, Georgia rose from the 12th-ranked state to 10th in 2020, with \$38.8 billion in exports, according to government data. The state still has a trade deficit and lost manufacturing jobs in 2020, but exports picked up late in the year, rising 17% through the Port of Savannah in the last quarter compared with the third quarter. Exports grew again in January, according to the Georgia Ports Authority.

### Vogtle Update

The pre-operational condenser vacuum test of the Vogtle Unit 3 turbine system has been completed. The milestone marks another step for the Vogtle 3 & 4 project toward operations. The test was conducted with the main turbine on turning gear and by operating supporting systems to establish the condenser vacuum, which is necessary to demonstrate the steam supply and water-cooling systems operate together and are ready to support hot functional testing and initial fuel load in the reactor. The condenser is part of the plant's turbine system, separate from the nuclear reactor, that liquifies steam to be reused after it passes through the high- and low-pressure turbines to power the generator and produce electricity.

### GM Announces EV-Only by 2035

General Motors announced in January that it would phase out gasoline-powered cars and trucks and sell only electric vehicles by 2035. EVs are the fastest-growing segment of the auto industry; however, they make up only about 3 percent of new car sales globally, according to the International Energy Agency. Sales of EVs rose last year in Europe and China, but they remain less popular in the United States. GM said its decision to switch to EVs was part of a broader plan to become carbon-neutral by 2040.

## Awards & Recognition

# MEAG POWER PARTICIPANTS' RECENT NOTABLE ACHIEVEMENTS

The focus on our Participants often tends toward economic development and related achievements, for good reason. But we certainly don't want to miss the opportunity to tout the fact that our Participant communities are some of the best places to live, work and play in the state.

Several of them have recently earned very deserving recognition for the hard work and planning that goes on behind the scenes to help make their hometowns the vibrant, desirable, livable places that they are.



## Cartersville Earns Exceptional Main Street Designation

Cartersville has earned Georgia's Exceptional Main Street (GEMS) designation. Georgia Main Street program's Main Street Approach to help spur downtown revitalization revolves around four points: promotion, economic vitality, organization and design.

The GEMS cities "have gone above and beyond expectations by making a strong and positive impact in their communities while utilizing the Main Street Approach," said Office of Downtown Development Director Jessica Reynolds in a news release, adding that downtown Cartersville's "commitment to excellence and stable leadership" resulted in the designation.

In all, nearly 20 cities hold the GEMS recognition, including four other MEAG Power Participant communities: Acworth, Moultrie, Newnan, and Thomasville.



## Adel, Thomasville Honored for Successful Planning

Adel and Thomasville were among 10 Georgia communities recognized by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA's) PlanFirst program for comprehensive planning that is helping to create more vibrant communities.

PlanFirst identifies state leaders in quality planning and plan implementation. Currently 34 communities are in the program. Its goal is to encourage communities to be successful by recognizing and rewarding those that demonstrate a pattern of implementing their local comprehensive plans.

Both Adel and Thomasville have been named previously. Adel was re-designated for developing a rural community healthcare model with the New Southwell Medical Center. Thomasville was re-designated for developing a celebrated streetscape for West Jackson Street in "The Bottom."



## Douglas and Griffin Receive Visionary City Award

Douglas and Griffin were among the nine recipients of the 2nd annual Visionary City Award presented by the Georgia Municipal Association and Georgia Trend Magazine.

"These cities exemplify what it means to be forward-thinking for their residents and generations to come and also serve as inspiring examples of civility, collaboration and creating communities of positive change across Georgia," said GMA Executive Director Larry Hanson.

Adel, Hogansville, Marietta and Thomasville were among the recipients of the inaugural Visionary City Award in 2020.

**Cairo** Sailfish Boats will invest more than \$1 million and increase their workforce by more than 30% as they expand their manufacturing headquarters in Cairo. This investment will create 70 jobs.

**Calhoun** TEKLAS, a Turkish manufacturer and supplier of electric vehicle parts, is investing \$6.5 million to open its first North American facility and headquarters in Gordon County. The 200,000-square-foot facility will bring 120 jobs to Calhoun when it opens this spring.

**Cartersville** Agile Cold Storage plans to build a 150,000-square-foot facility at Hamilton Crossing Road in Cartersville, where the company plans to create about 70 jobs.

**Covington** Bridgestone Golf announced that the company’s Covington manufacturing facility has increased its production staff by approximately 20% — the majority of which is drawn from the local community — because of heavy demand for its products.

**Covington** Publix has announced its second Newton County location, the Covington Town Center project. The grocer’s 48,387 square feet will serve as the anchor store for the phase one development.

**Jackson** MasterBrand Cabinets Inc. is opening a Southeastern U.S. manufacturing and distribution facility near Jackson that will add nearly 400 jobs when it opens this year.

**Palmetto** Microsoft, the maker of Windows software and Xbox video-game consoles, announced plans to build a 250,000-square-foot data center and create at least 300 jobs during construction and an estimated 20 permanent jobs.

**West Point** JinTec America, a supplier of interior automobile parts, will invest nearly \$4.5 million in opening its first U.S. advanced manufacturing facility, creating 70 jobs in Harris County.

**West Point** Hyundai TRANSYS, a renowned automobile transmission manufacturer, will invest more than \$240 million in the expansion of their Georgia operations, which includes a 620,000-square-foot facility near the company’s existing location on the Kia campus, expected to create over 670 full-time jobs.

## U.S. Coal Generation Less than Nuclear in 2020

U.S. coal-fired electricity generation totaled 774 million MWh in 2020, less than both natural gas-fired (1.6 billion MWh) and nuclear-powered generation (790 million MWh), according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration’s (EIA) Electric Power Monthly. Last year marked the first time in the U.S. since at least 1949 that coal was not the largest or second-largest source of annual electricity generation.

Coal-fired generation continues its downward trend as more units are being retired, and those remaining are being used less often. U.S. coal-fired generation capacity was 313 GW in 2008 — the earliest for which EIA’s State Electricity Profiles have capacity factor data — and coal’s capacity factor was 72% that year. By 2020, coal’s operating capacity had fallen to 223 GW, and the coal fleet’s capacity factor had fallen to 40%.

Nuclear generation has held relatively steady in the previous decade. U.S. nuclear power, with 97 GW of capacity in 2020, has less than half as much operating capacity as coal. However, nuclear power plants in 2020 operated at a capacity factor of 93%.

## 2021 MAKE A NOTE

**MEAG Power Board Meeting**  
May 20

**MEAG Power Annual Meeting**  
July 12-14  
Information forthcoming

## MEET YOUR colleagues



**J.D. Stallings**  
Mayor,  
City of  
Thomaston

J.D. Stallings is a life-long Thomaston advocate. Born and raised in the city, Stallings is currently serving his second term as mayor. He was first elected in 2015 after serving on the city council.

“I care about the people here and wanted to get involved in local government to help build the future of our city,” explains Stallings. Sometimes, that involves working on basic infrastructure and services.

“The city council has been busy with new water infrastructure, which is critical for new business and serving neighborhoods. We have a new entrepreneur among the downtown merchants, as well as a Chick-fil-A restaurant newly opened,” says the mayor.

Stallings notes the value of MEAG Power’s partnership with Thomaston in providing electricity to the community. “Our capital projects are enabled many times by the utility revenues. We can be competitive with other communities in-state and out because Thomaston is a local electricity provider.”

The mayor serves on the local Industrial Development Authority and works with Upson County in finding ways to draw new investment from industry and business.

Stallings notes with pride the recent deep run into the 2020-2021 GHSA Class AAA Girls State Basketball Championship of the Upson-Lee High School Lady Knights. He often communicates on social media to support young athletes, and is a big fan of the Lady Knights. Their historic season ended at the Final Four, just one win away from the state championship game.

But the pride in their accomplishment is shared in the community just as strongly as any new restaurant opening or new company choosing Thomaston. Stallings is an equal-opportunity Thomaston advocate, to be sure.

# MEAG POWER **current** COMMUNITIES

## THOMASTON, GEORGIA

**J.D. Stallings**  
Mayor

**Russell Thompson**  
City Manager

**Heather Blackmon**  
Main Street Director

**Kyle Fletcher**  
Thomaston Upson Industrial  
Development Authority



## THOMASTON

### *Heart of the Golden Triangle*

In the summer of 1925, a group of B.F. Goodrich officials looking for a site to manufacture tire cord chartered a Pullman car from Akron, Ohio, and toured the South. They landed at a company in a community that was already known for its successful textile operations, Martha Mills in Thomaston.

Goodrich purchased Martha Mills, and operations began in 1927. At its peak, the tire company employed 1,400 and fueled the local prosperity that laid the groundwork for 21st century Thomaston.

Thomaston, in Upson County, is on the banks of the Potato Creek in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. Its location, prized by those Goodrich executives nearly 100 years ago, remains ideal in being centrally located between three key Georgia cities – Atlanta, Macon and Columbus. Thomaston is 60 miles from Atlanta, 46 from Macon and 56 from Columbus; the region is known as the Golden Triangle.

“Our location provides our residents easy access to additional culture, entertainment and shopping in three directions while we keep our small-town feel,” affirms Mayor J.D. Stallings. “Business can reach Atlanta’s airport in an hour to receive clients and customers,” he adds.

But that small-town feel doesn’t mean a lack of activity. The Thomaston City Council has plans for several multi-thousand-dollar budget allocations for city improvements, including a downtown business district “master plan” and market analysis. Early in 2021, Thomaston broke ground on a



The courthouse is on the square in the center of town. Its restoration revealed beautiful stained glass panels.



Main Street sponsors an annual Art Walk for local artisans.

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# THOMASTON

**POPULATION:** 9,000

**UPSON COUNTY POPULATION:** 27,153

**UTILITIES:** Electricity, water/sewer

**TRANSPORTATION:** U.S Highway 19, SR 74  
and SR 36; 30 minutes to I-85 and I-75

**NOTABLE EMPLOYERS:**

- Ranew's Company – High-tech eco-paint and industrial coatings
- Dart Container – Manufacturer of plastic food-service products
- Golden Star Inc. – Manufacturer of industrial cleaning supplies
- Criterion Technology Inc. – Injection molding and plastic optic products
- Interfor – Lumber manufacturing
- Quad/Graphics – Commercial contract printer of magazines
- Standard Textile Company Inc. – Textile products for the health care & hospitality industries
- TenCate Protective Fabrics – Dye and Finishing Plant
- Thomaston Mills – Textile Sheeting
- Turkey Creek Snacks – Processing & distribution of pork rinds and cracklings snacks
- AVAPCO – A biorefinery that produces cellulose (pulp) and ethanol from woody biomass

*“Ranew’s, a product solutions company, our newest industry, is a \$13 million investment and 30-plus jobs in our community.”*

Mayor J.D. Stallings

new 10,000-square-foot fire station. The current fire station is 1966 vintage and insufficient for today's needs.

The city also is working with the county to be designated “broadband-ready.” There are areas of rural Upson County that are underserved with Internet service. The community is aligning its efforts with Governor Kemp’s pledge to upgrade all of Georgia.

Just as its urban neighbors of the Golden Triangle offer cultural and entertainment attractions, Thomaston offers ample recreational opportunities.

Along Potato Creek to sections of the Flint River are whitewater canoeing and kayaking for accomplished paddlers. Float the Flint, sponsored by The Upson Chamber of Commerce, attracts families and all levels of water enthusiasts. Other outdoor activities including hiking, mountain biking and rock climbing. Sprewell Bluff Park is a prime destination.

Thomaston has proven itself a resilient community in building a sustainable economy for its citizens. Early dependence on labor-intensive textiles evolved into a roster of diverse industries dotted with forward-thinking market leaders.

# THOMASTON

## *Textiles, Technology and Timber*

Thomaston could be hailed as the “comeback kid” when you look at the textile industry in Georgia. Early Georgia had approximately 38 textile mills in operation, and in the later years became the South’s leading textile producer. In 1899, Thomaston Cotton Mills shipped textiles worldwide.

Wars, industrialization and competitive forces changed the face of textiles and prospects for its workers. From 1994 to 2005, the United States lost more than 900,000 textile and apparel jobs to offshoring, according to Area Development Magazine.



Yet, a little over four years ago, Marriott announced that Thomaston’s Standard Textile operation will produce all of its “Made in America” textiles. Marriott requires about 5.6 million pounds of textiles annually for its 3,000 U.S. hotels. For Standard Textile, it meant 150 new jobs and bragging rights on its manufacturing efficiency as the sole provider of a sustainable U.S.-made product. The Marriott partnership also eliminates annual greenhouse gas emissions of more than 300 ocean-going container shipments from a typical offshore supplier, according to Marriott.



Textiles have come a long way from the early coarse fabrics, sometimes called “Georgia wool,” or a canvas-like cotton duck. Companies such as Thomaston Mills produce eco-friendly luxury linens, and Tencate Protective Fabrics produces lifesaving flame-resistant fabric for the fire-fighting and military markets.

Thomaston is also home to unique technology companies. Criterion Technology Inc., whose flagship product is optical domes for security cameras, retooled its production lines for custom optics and sensors for contract markets. The company serves underwater applications, medical innovation in macular degeneration detection and sensor engineering in autonomous vehicles, for example. Ninety-five percent of the business is precision contract manufacturing.

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# THOMASTON

## *Textiles, Technology and Timber*

Biotech is another Thomaston industry of note, one that has received national attention from the Department of Energy. AVAPCO's Thomaston research site, in collaboration with other biofuel technology organizations, is working on a grant-funded project that aims to produce a biofuel and "Bioplus" nanocellulose. AVAPCO brings its proprietary pulp process to the renewable initiative for jet fuel, gasoline and diesel.

Timber, too, remains a significant industry in Thomaston, and is gaining prominence. Interfor, a Canadian company, is investing more than \$100 million to modernize its Thomaston plant, which currently produces more than 154 million board feet of Southern Yellow Pine annually. The capital improvements will increase board feet production by millions.

## *Thomaston's Unique Place in African-American History*

Frances Walker's shotgun home for 70 years is Thomaston's African-American Museum. The home contains artifacts and memorabilia illustrating the lives of African-American people in the rural South.

The Museum is but one of the ways Thomaston and Upson County citizenry reflect on African-American history.

On May 29, 1866, residents of Upson County and other Georgians began what has become the oldest, continuously observed annual event in the United States honoring the Emancipation Proclamation, issued by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863 during the Civil War.

By the early 20th century, the event drew leaders from around the state.

Each year on May 29, residents and visitors gather in Thomaston to celebrate Emancipation Day. This will mark the 155th year of this momentous celebration.

