

FOCUS ON

Our Purchasing Division: Buying the goods and services to keep the County running

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The Purchasing Division assists County departments with getting the supplies they need to do their jobs

Like any business with thousands of employees, it takes a lot to run the government. But it's not just office supplies. The County buys police badges, fire trucks, playground equipment, water valves, and even traffic cameras and computers that help the County keep our roads clear and help residents monitor their daily commute. Goods and services are purchased that are critical to the infrastructure of the County, including the building of roads and road maintenance, parks construction, and water and utility projects. While most

businesses may never purchase these things, they are crucial to the services the County departments provide to Gwinnett County residents.

A 13-member Purchasing Division in the Financial Services Department includes two buying teams and a contract management team. They buy everything that costs more than \$5,000 and they provide assistance to departments to buy things within their authority. The County's Purchasing Ordinance and state statutes provide governance on the process and procedures for all County purchases.

Led by Roslyn Forstot, the purchasing teams saved the County almost \$4 million last year alone by negotiating with vendors. They are ranked among the top American counties, having received the national Award of Excellence in Procurement award for 15 years straight. Gwinnett Purchasing has been accredited since 2000 with the Outstanding Agency Accreditation Achievement Award, demonstrating best practices in our procurement operations.



The Purchasing Staff holds an annual Purchasing Symposium for prospective vendors to explain how to do business with the County. Vendors are given an opportunity to meet with County staff and take advantage of networking opportunities as well as obtain information on current and upcoming County projects. This year, 250 interested vendors showed up to meet local officials. There is also a [Business Opportunities handbook](#) available online on the Gwinnett County website. The County currently has thousands of registered suppliers.

Purchasing Division: an award-winning team



*County staff network with potential vendors
at the Purchasing Symposium*

Gwinnett requests competitive sealed bids and requests for proposals for contracts greater than \$100,000, and the Board of Commissioners makes the final award. The County also uses informal written bids, small purchases, and annual contracts.

“We know we must treat suppliers and contractors fairly and equitably and maximize competition whenever possible,” said

Purchasing Manager Bryant Davis. “We believe a competitive environment helps both buyers and sellers and that suppliers are our

best resource for keeping abreast of current products, services, updates, and new information.”

Gwinnett advertises about 170 formal procurements annually on the County website, in the *Gwinnett Daily Post*, on its *TVgwinnett* government-access cable channel, and at a centralized solicitation center located on the second floor of the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center in Lawrenceville.

“Our group is passionate, professional, and committed to providing best service and the best value for the County,” says Forstot.