



Gwinnett County Government Communications Division NEWS RELEASE

Gwinnett

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PUBLIC SAFETY, MAINTAINING ASSETS ARE PRIORITIES FOR PROPOSED 2019 COUNTY BUDGET

(Lawrenceville, Ga., Nov. 27, 2018) – Gwinnett Board of Commissioners Chairman Charlotte Nash presented her \$1.8 billion proposed budget for 2019 during a briefing Tuesday.

The proposed operating budget, excluding transfers between funds, is up about 4.6 percent. Much of the increase in the operating budget is related to increased personnel costs as the County adds necessary personnel and addresses compensation issues. The proposal includes a \$1.34 billion operating budget and \$434 million for capital improvements, including SPLOST-funded projects.

Nash said the annual budget starts with base funding to maintain core county services such as police and fire protection, jail, courts, roads, transit and water. Additions for new or ongoing initiatives reflect priorities set by the Board of Commissioners last spring.

“This proposed balanced budget continues Gwinnett’s tradition of conservative budgeting based on multi-year planning,” said Nash. “This 2019 budget proposal maintains adequate reserves, uses pay-as-you-go financing for capital improvements and also sets aside money for future obligations.”

One focus for the 2019 budget is making sure that a “safe and healthy community” remains a top priority. The 2019 proposed budget adds more police officers in the community and sheriff’s deputies to staff the detention center as well as the new courtrooms resulting from the expansion of the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center. The budget also includes adding positions for Fire and Emergency Services and funding for construction of the Georgia State Patrol Post 51.

Another priority, “mobility and access,” includes expanding transit and improving and maintaining roads and the airport. The “livability and comfort” priority funds libraries, parks senior services, trails and greenways, park program expansion and addressing homelessness. Economic development and redevelopment, a new Water Innovation Center, reliable Infrastructure, and the 2040 Unified Plan fall under the “strong vibrant local economy” priority.

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“Communication and engagement” includes the addition of education and outreach positions for the departments of Planning & Development and Community Services.

In discussing the increase in staffing, Nash noted that Gwinnett’s population has grown by 22 percent since 2008 while County staff has only increased eight percent.

The tax digest, the value of all assessed property, is above its pre-recession level at \$30.3 billion after hitting a low in 2013 and beginning to recover in 2014. Less than half of the total operating budget is funded with property tax revenue.

Five resident volunteers served on the 2019 budget review committee that heard presentations by department directors and elected officials and studied business plans, budget needs and revenue projections before making budget recommendations to Nash. Videos and documents from that process are available online at www.tvgwinnett.com.

Commissioners will take oral or written public comments at a public hearing on Monday, Dec. 10 at 7 p.m. in the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center auditorium, 75 Langley Drive in Lawrenceville, and online through Dec. 31 before adopting a final balanced budget as required by law at their first meeting in January.

The entire proposed 2019 budget document is available online at www.gwinnettcounty.com and as a hard copy in the Financial Services office at GJAC, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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