



Planning for Gwinnett's Future

CHARLOTTE J. NASH, CHAIRMAN
GWINNETT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

As Gwinnett County celebrates its bicentennial, we need to think hard about where we as a County want to go in the next 100 years. Gwinnett currently has a population of about 960,000 people, but experts project that by 2040, we will have more than 1.5 million residents. For Gwinnett to remain an economic leader and foremost in quality of life, it is imperative that we look to the future and start planning now.

And we are. Gwinnett is in the midst of developing its 2040 Unified Plan, known as a comprehensive plan in other places. We are working on a short-, medium-, and long-range transit plan. We recently approved a multi-year plan for a countywide trail system.

The cornerstone of all of these plans is public input, typically involving multiple opportunities to collect suggestions and feedback. These are your plans, your tax dollars, and your community that are affected. The time to weigh in on projects is while they're being formed. We have held open house sessions and sent staff to community events to conduct in-person surveys. We also use online surveys and sometimes phone surveys.

The 2040 Unified Plan is the broadest plan we are working on. It will provide a blueprint of how the County will develop over the next 22 years. It will consider future land use and attempt to address people's needs, opportunities, goals, and visions. It will incorporate capital improvements, transportation, housing,



and economic development, as well as natural and cultural resources. It will influence decisions and policies affecting everyone in Gwinnett County. The plan is expected to be adopted in 2019.

Another plan with far-reaching implications is *Connect Gwinnett: Transit Plan*, the County's first major look at transit since the launch of

Gwinnett County Transit in 2001. The planning team has been analyzing modes of transit, possible areas of service, routes, and potential funding over the next five, ten, and thirty years. The team's final recommendations are expected this summer.

The Board also adopted a Countywide Trails Master Plan that envisions an interconnected web of bike and pedestrian pathways for recreation, commuting, or running errands. As part of the 320-mile network of trails, the study proposes nine "Signature Trails," regionally significant trails with amenities, connectivity between destinations, and other defining features. Some projects will be built relatively soon, but others could take decades, depending on funding.

We face major decisions that will shape our county for generations to come, and it's important that we get it right. Help us make the best plans possible. Visit the county website, learn about the plans, come to the sessions, and share your thoughts.

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