

GWINNETT
COUNTY

FEBRUARY
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Connection

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GWINNETT COUNTY GOVERNMENT**

Commissioners establish Police Citizens Advisory Board

To strengthen relationships between the department and the community, the Gwinnett County Police Department is setting up a Citizens Advisory Board to offer input on issues like transparency, use of force, training, and dealing with complaints.

The 11-member board, made up of representatives from various groups around the county, will provide advice to the Police Department, the county administrator, and the Board of Commissioners and assist the department through a collaborative problem-solving process that supports both the community and the Police Department's desire to enhance public safety.

The board will offer general community feedback on reforms that improve community-oriented policing practices, transparency, professionalism, accountability, community inclusion, fairness, effectiveness, and public trust while taking into account national standards, best practices, current and emerging research, and community expectations.

The Citizens Advisory Board will support the Board's vision of a vibrantly connected community where all stakeholders feel informed, engaged, and heard.



AROUND GWINNETT

Harvest Gwinnett offering community gardens in six new locations

If you're itching to dig in the dirt but have no place to do it, the Harvest Gwinnett community gardens program is accepting applications for its three established sites plus six more garden locations around the county.

Applications for 4-foot-by-8-foot raised beds will be accepted while supply lasts. Other applicants will be added to a waiting list. Each plot costs \$35 for the year. Please visit LiveHealthyGwinnett.com to apply for a location near you or to learn about classes and volunteer opportunities.

Gwinnett 101 and Gwinnett Youth Commission accepting applications

Learn the rationale about how and why Gwinnett County Government does what it does by attending the Gwinnett 101 Citizens Academy, a 12-week program that gives participants a peek behind the curtain at County operations and policies. Participants meet one evening a week to talk with County leaders and visit County facilities. Apply for the spring session by filling out the form at Gwinnett101.com by March 2. Classes start April 1. The Gwinnett Youth Commission, an eight-week summer leadership program for high school students, is accepting applications through April 12. Classes for both programs will be in person but limited to 15 participants each.

Gwinnett Transit offers mobile ticketing

Gwinnett County Transit riders can now use their cell phones to pay their fares, helping them avoid handling cash or cards and reducing contact between riders, drivers, and surfaces during the ongoing pandemic.

Patrons can purchase mobile tickets through a free Token Transit App that can be downloaded from the App Store and Google Play. Through February, users can get 50 percent off their first purchase in the app. For pass validation, customers must give the Token Transit App access to their smartphone's Bluetooth, then bring their phone near the validator on the dashboard so the mobile ticket can be detected. The program is available on Xpress, which connects all of metro Atlanta. Breeze Cards and cash are still accepted. For more information, visit GCTransit.com or call 770.822.5010.



PROTECTING OUR RESOURCES

Guard the drain, guard the water

The stormwater drainage system is intended to prevent flooding. Unlike wastewater, stormwater is not cleaned or treated before re-entering the environment. Water flowing into the storm drains empties into natural waterways.

Stormwater can pick up debris and pollutants on its way to the storm drain. Debris can lead to a clogged storm drain, which can actually cause flooding. Pollutants picked up by stormwater runoff can harm our waterways.

It's up to all of us to help guard our waterways from harmful pollution. Here's how you can help keep the stormwater drainage system clean:

- Pick up trash on your street, especially near a drain
- Clean up your pet's waste
- Never dumping anything down a storm drain

Things other than rainwater that are dumped or allowed to enter a storm drain are considered illicit discharges and are prohibited by the county's Illicit Discharge and Illegal Connection Ordinance. Please report any illicit discharges to Water Resources at 678.376.7000.

DIY FIX-A-LEAK VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS ON WEBEX

Learn how to identify leaks at home, simple DIY repairs, and how fixing leaks can save money. Virtual Fix-a-Leak workshops are set for March 16 at 1:00pm and March 18 at 6:00pm. Register at Gwinnett2o.com, by sending an email with your name, address, and phone number to DWRWorkshops@GwinnettCounty.com, or by calling 678.376.7193.

TAX COMMISSIONER

Apply for a homestead exemption!

The best way to reduce your property tax bill is to apply for a homestead exemption. If you own and occupy a home in Gwinnett as your primary residence as of January 1, you likely qualify. Apply at [GwinnettTaxCommissioner.com/Apply](https://www.gwinnettx.com/apply) by April 1, and staff will help determine your eligibility and the best exemption for your situation. You must apply by April 1 for relief this year. If you already have an exemption in place, you do not need to reapply.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Smoking can cause fatal house fires

Smoking cigarettes, pipes, and cigars is the leading cause of house fire deaths and causes thousands of house fires and millions of dollars in damage across the nation each year.

Fires from smoking tobacco can be prevented by following some basic tips:

- If you smoke, use only fire-safe cigarettes
- Smoke outside; most deaths result from fires that start in living rooms, family rooms, or bedrooms
- Keep cigarettes, lighters, matches, and other smoking materials up high out of the reach of children
- Use a deep, sturdy ashtray and place it away from anything that can burn
- Do not discard cigarettes in mulch, potted plants, peat moss, dried grasses, leaves, or other things that could ignite easily
- Before you throw away butts and ashes, make sure they are fully out, preferably by dousing them in water or sand
- Never smoke and never allow anyone to smoke where medical oxygen is used; medical oxygen can cause materials to ignite more easily and make fires burn faster and hotter than normal



SPLOST

County partners with city of Lawrenceville to preserve historic Hooper-Renwick School

Gwinnett County and the city of Lawrenceville are collaborating to create a new themed library at the site of the former Hooper-Renwick School, which served as Gwinnett's only public school for African American students for decades.

As a themed library within the Gwinnett County Public Library system, it will incorporate cultural artifacts with resources and information and encourage people to learn about segregation and desegregation in Gwinnett County through the stories and personal items of people who attended the school during the Civil Rights Era in the 1950s and 1960s.

Gwinnett County will use the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, also known as SPLOST, to fund construction and the city of Lawrenceville will provide 3.8 acres for free. The library will be constructed by renovating 11,400 square feet of the existing facility and constructing a new, approximately 13,600-square-foot addition, which will include a second-floor entrance facing Neal Boulevard.

CHECK IT OUT

Book concierge program allows staff to suggest reading material

Looking for something new to read, but not sure where to start? Let the knowledgeable staff at Gwinnett County Public Library select your next great read.

Simply fill out a basic online form with some information about your reading preferences and your preferred pick-up location. Once the staff has an idea of what you like, they will select up to 10 books for you. Once your books are ready, you will receive an email notifying you that you can pick them up. This service is great for people looking for books for a particular age or grade level, or for others seeking suggestions in a specific genre.



SERVING GWINNETT

Mom says to wear your mask and wear it right

Gwinnett Moms and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say that wearing a mask is helpful to prevent catching and spreading COVID-19. There are many ways to wear a mask, most of them wrong. Gwinnett Moms are here to tell you not to wear it like a chin beard or with our nose sticking out. The whole point of a mask, mom says, is to capture exhaled particles and keep them from infecting others, or to help block particles from others from being inhaled. Most people inhale and exhale through their noses so the majority of virus particles will be taken in through the nose, which is chock-full of receptors that are ideal for the COVID-19 virus. So, when you go out this winter, wear a sweater and a mask, wash your hands often, and keep your distance.

For more tips and COVID-19 resources, please visit [ListenToGwinnettMoms.com](https://www.listen toegwinnettmoms.com).

Commissioners approve 2021 budget

The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners approved the 2021 budget totaling 1.91 billion, up 3.7 percent from 2020. It consists of \$1.47 billion for operations and \$441 million for capital improvements.

Funds were set aside for new initiatives, such as warming stations for extreme cold and performance audits for accountability and efficiency. The budget includes funding for coronavirus response, the Situational Awareness and Crime Response Center, 33 new police positions, enhancements to a traffic management network, two new parks, the new Rowen knowledge community, the Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center, and the new Water Tower water innovation center.

The 2021 budget and supporting documents are available online at [GwinnettCounty.com](https://www.gwinnettx.com).

GWINNETT COUNTY CONNECTION

ESCANEE PARA LEER EN ESPAÑOL
한국어 버전은 QR 코드를 스캔해 주세요



Gwinnett County Connection questions/comments:
Info@GwinnettCounty.com | 770.822.7180

Water bill questions: 678.376.6700