

# NEWS & EVENTS

in District 2 with Commissioner Ben Ku

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December 2020



Hello!

Happy holidays! I hope you'll all be able to fit in some time to safely gather with family, even if your celebration is virtual. It's been a tough year for many of us, and as we head toward 2021, I look forward to seeing how our community continues to work together to slow the spread of COVID-19 and keep each other safe.

For me personally, this has been a roller coaster of a year. We sadly lost our cat Scruffles in January, but the Dachshunds, Oliver and Dodger, have been doing well. I've enjoyed returning to my normal of working from home and found a little better county-work-life balance. My next door neighbor died due to COVID-19 and I continue to hear stories of people having lingering problems due to contracting the virus. I got engaged in October and we got a new Boykin Spaniel puppy, Shadow. My 1-year-old daughter is already walking and using the potty! I'm very excited about working with the new 2021 Board of Commissioners and I anticipate many positive improvements in the coming years to continue to make Gwinnett a model government.

Last night I held an employee town hall listening session and we talked about my vision for the rest of my term. I will continue to push for more transparency, efficiency, infrastructure investments, and open source software solutions.

Lastly, see below for an opportunity to apply for a Stormwater Authority appointment.

Have a wonderful and safe holiday season, and a happy, healthy new year!

## Happening Around Gwinnett

### Do you have a voting plan for the January 5 Runoff?

Make a voting plan for the January 5 Runoff Election! There are many ways to cast your ballot. Vote advance in person December 14 to December 31 at one of several locations throughout the county; please be aware that the locations are closed December 24 and 25. You can also cast an absentee ballot. Request your ballot by December 31 at [BallotRequest.SOS.GA.gov](https://BallotRequest.SOS.GA.gov). Then, return your ballot by mail, by dropping it into one of the many secure drop boxes around the county, or by hand-delivering it to the Gwinnett Voter Registrations and Elections Beauty P. Baldwin Office. If you choose to vote on Election Day, find your assigned polling precinct at [MVP.SOS.GA.gov](https://MVP.SOS.GA.gov). Learn more at [GwinnettElections.com](https://GwinnettElections.com).



### ¿Tiene un plan de votación para el Desempate del 5 de Enero?

Hay muchas formas de emitir su voto en el Desempate de las Elecciones del 5 de Enero. Vote por adelantado en persona del 14 de Diciembre al 31 de Diciembre en una de varias ubicaciones en todo el condado; tenga en cuenta que estas ubicaciones están cerradas el 24 y 25 de Diciembre. También puede emitir una boleta de voto en ausente. Solicite su boleta antes del 31 de Diciembre en [BallotRequest.SOS.GA.gov](https://BallotRequest.SOS.GA.gov). Luego, devuelva su boleta por correo, dejándola en uno de los muchos buzones alrededor del condado, o entregándola personalmente en la Oficina de Inscripción de Votantes y Elecciones de Gwinnett Beauty P. Baldwin. Si elige votar en el Día de las Elecciones, busque el precinto electoral asignado en [MVP.SOS.GA.gov](https://MVP.SOS.GA.gov). Obtenga más información en [GwinnettElections.com](https://GwinnettElections.com).



## Share your thoughts on the proposed 2021 budget

Chairman Nash presented her final [proposed budget](#) to guide County spending for the 2021 fiscal year during a [briefing](#) to the Board of Commissioners on November 17. The proposed budget for 2021 totals \$1.91 billion, up 3.7 percent from the 2020 adopted budget. It consists of a \$1.47 billion operating budget and a \$441 million capital improvements budget, which includes funds from the County's [SPLOST program](#). You can submit your comments about the proposed budget [online](#) through December 31. The Board will

consider adopting a final budget at our first meeting of the new year, Tuesday, January 5, 2021.

## Gwinnett signs agreement with GGC to operate entrepreneur center

The Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center is on schedule to open next spring! We recently signed an agreement with Georgia Gwinnett College to staff and operate the center. The center, which will be located in downtown Lawrenceville, will provide networking opportunities, coworking spaces, and resources to entrepreneurs across Gwinnett County. Stay tuned for more information about the center's opening date in future newsletters.



## County purchases 39-acre Gwinnett Place Mall property

The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday approved the Urban Redevelopment Agency of Gwinnett County's \$23 million purchase of 39 acres of the Gwinnett Place Mall site from Gwinnett Place Mall GA, LLC.

The purchase is part of a strategic effort by Gwinnett's government to create new opportunities for catalytic development in the area in partnership with the Gwinnett Place CID and local property owners.

In the coming months, the County will begin a comprehensive planning process to explore ways to redevelop the site, actively engaging our Department of Planning and Development, the Gwinnett Place Community Improvement District, and residents to set a new vision for the property. To learn more about the Gwinnett Place Mall property purchased, click [here](#).

## GJAC expansion set to open this spring

Officials cut the ribbon on an [expansion of the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center](#) in downtown Lawrenceville on December 15. The \$75-million expansion project, funded by SPLOST, includes a five-level parking deck, open since 2019, and a new, five-story courthouse building which provides space for a jury assembly room as well as eight courtrooms, holding cells, workspace for the District Attorney, mediation rooms, and space for up to six additional courtrooms.



At the end of the ribbon cutting ceremony, County Administrator Glenn Stephens revealed that the courthouse addition would be named the Charlotte J. Nash Court Building in honor of Chairman Charlotte J. Nash. Nash, who was born and raised in Gwinnett, has served as chairman of the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners since 2011 and previously served in staff roles, including Grants Manager, Budget Manager, Financial Services Director, and County Administrator, before retiring in 2004.

A covered walkway from the parking deck, a security node at the entrance to the Charlotte J. Nash Court Building and a new, enclosed pedestrian bridge to the existing GJAC building will open to guests and employees December 21. The full court building is expected to open to the public this spring. See photos from the ribbon cutting event on the [County's Flickr page](#).

## What's New in District 2

### Apply for a seat on the Stormwater Authority

Interested in getting more involved with your community? The board is reviewing applications for an appointment to the Stormwater Authority. The Stormwater Authority advises the Department of Water Resources Stormwater Utility. The SWA approves updates to ordinances and policies and approves rates prior to adoption by the Board of Commissioners. Examples of items that come before the SWA include any updates to the stormwater sections of the Unified Development Ordinance and Gwinnett County Code of Ordinances; updates to the Gwinnett County Stormwater Management Manual; and updates to the Stormwater Utility Credits manual. The SWA also reviews the finances of the stormwater utility. SWA



### Listen to Gwinnett Moms as we prepare for the holidays

We're back with some holiday season safety reminders, courtesy of #ListenToGwinnettMoms! No matter how you and your family celebrate winter holidays this year, remember to continue following these simple, mom-approved COVID-19 safety tips when spending time with others:

- Remember how mom is always reminding us to take a jacket, scarf, and gloves before leaving the house? Consider this your heads-up that masks are now at the top of that checklist.
- A snowball's throw away keeps coronavirus at bay. Keep your distance from those outside your pod, staying at least six feet apart.
- Mittens may protect you from the cold, but they have nothing on germs. Wash your hands often to protect yourself and loved ones.
- Spread joy, not COVID-19. If you were exposed to someone who is sick or if you are experiencing any symptoms, please stay home and seek medical attention if necessary.

Check your holiday list against [CDC guidelines](https://www.cdc.gov) and visit [ListenToGwinnettMoms.com](https://www.ListenToGwinnettMoms.com) for a round-up of COVID-19 resources. And don't forget to show us how you safely celebrate on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn with the hashtag #ListenToGwinnettMoms or by sharing your wisdom with us using [this form](#).

Gwinnett County and #ListenToGwinnettMoms wish you a warm, peaceful, and safe holiday season! Want more motherly advice? Hear what Juree, a Gwinnett mom from Suwanee, has to say in [our latest video](#) about staying safe this holiday season.

### Recycle Right over the holidays

The holiday season can mean lots of cardboard boxes from gifts, cans from holiday meals, and other recyclables piling up around the house. Do you know how to #RecycleRightGwinnett? Make sure you're recycling right this holiday season by following these simple tips:

- Recycle clean plastic bottles (#1 and #2 only for those in unincorporated Gwinnett), cans, paper, and cardboard;
- Keep food and liquid out of your recycling; and
- Place your recyclables directly in the container — do not bag recyclables.

Visit [GCSolidWaste.com](https://www.GCSolidWaste.com) to learn what's recyclable.



### Bring One for the Chipper

Wondering what to do with your Christmas tree when it's time to take it down? Give it a second life by participating in the annual Bring One for the Chipper event sponsored by Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful in partnership with Gwinnett County. Between December 26 and January 25, you can drop off natural Christmas trees at designated fire stations and other locations. The trees will be chipped into mulch for use at parks. Find the list of all drop-off sites or register to volunteer for the January 30

chipping event at Bethesda Park by visiting [GwinnettCB.org](https://www.GwinnettCB.org).

## Special Events and Happenings

**Events and activities are suspended in compliance with recommendations from the CDC and local public health officials.**

Visit [GwinnettCounty.com](https://www.GwinnettCounty.com) or follow the County's social media channels to learn about future events.

Ben Ku, District 2 Commissioner  
Gwinnett County

[Ben.Ku@GwinnettCounty.com](mailto:Ben.Ku@GwinnettCounty.com)