

# NEWS & EVENTS



in District 3 with  
Commissioner Watkins

January 2022



Greetings!

Happy New Year! It's 2022, and looking ahead, we can see new and familiar challenges that we will need to tackle together.

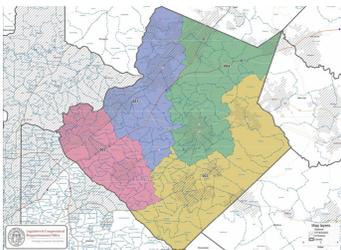
Remember, it's not too late to get vaccinated against COVID-19. With the help of community partners, more than 6,600 people got a shot during our Finish Strong Together event from December 10 to 12. Join those people and many more who are supporting our community by doing what they can to keep our community safe and healthy.

## Happening Around Gwinnett

### Commissioners adopt budget for 2022

The Board of Commissioners approved a \$2.07 billion budget for 2022, up 8.1 percent from last year. The newly approved budget does not require a millage rate increase. The adopted spending plan consists of a \$1.6 billion operating budget and a \$455 million capital improvements budget, which includes funds from the County's voter-approved SPLOST program.

With more growth on the horizon, the County's services and infrastructure must keep up. Two-thirds of the operating budget is dedicated to the areas of public safety and public works. The capital budget will pay for new facilities, roads and parks as well as maintenance for existing assets and infrastructure. [Learn more and read highlights from the 2022 budget.](#)



### Commissioners propose new district map to legislative delegation

Once every decade, the Georgia General Assembly modifies the district boundaries for various governing bodies to rebalance representation.

Georgia legislators grant local governments the opportunity to propose their own maps for consideration by the General Assembly. To obtain public input, my fellow commissioners and I hosted a series of open houses to learn what matters most to our residents when it comes to redistricting. The County took these preferences into account while working with the General Assembly's Legislative and Congressional Reapportionment Office to draft the proposed commission district map. [View the proposed district map](#) and [view the current district map.](#)

The Georgia General Assembly plans to address local government redistricting during the upcoming session that starts January 10 for new district lines to be in place by the next election cycle. On **Thursday, January 13 at 7:00pm**, the Gwinnett State House and Senate Delegations will hold a public joint committee meeting on the proposed maps for the Gwinnett Board of Commissioners and Board of Education at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center located at 75 Langley Drive in Lawrenceville. Residents are welcome to attend to share their feedback.

Ultimately, the Georgia General Assembly will make the final decision on a new commission district map for Gwinnett County.

## Annual plant sale now underway

UGA Extension Gwinnett's popular Plant Sale Fundraiser is now underway! Now through March 4, place your order for a variety of fruit and ornamental plants that thrive in Georgia soil. The annual event supports the 4-H youth development program and Master Gardener projects.

Purchases can be made in person at the office or by mailing in an order form available at [GwinnettExtension.com](http://GwinnettExtension.com). The sale and pre-ordered plant pickup will be March 17 from 9:00am to 5:45pm at the Gwinnett County Fairgrounds.



## Bring One for the Chipper

In Gwinnett County, the annual tradition of Christmas tree recycling began in 1984. For years, Gwinnett has lead the state in recycling more trees than any other county. As the tree-cycling tradition continues, Gwinnett County homeowners and residents are encouraged to recycle their Christmas trees. Not only are they helping the community by recycling, but they are also helping the environment by the trees being turned into mulch which will be used in Gwinnett County parks.

From now until January 24, you can drop off your Christmas tree at [designated Gwinnett County Fire Stations](#). Trees must be free of lights, tinsel, decorations, and tree stands in order to be recycled. The trees will be chipped Saturday, January 29 from 8:00am to 11:00am at Bethesda Park.

## What's New in District 3

### Republic Services temporarily suspends recycling, bulky item, and yard waste pickup

Republic Services' trash and recycling customers in unincorporated Gwinnett County can expect uninterrupted, on-schedule trash collection, but due to the significant impact that a spike in COVID-19 infections is having on Republic's workforce, recycling services will be suspended until their workforce begins to normalize. Bulky items and yard waste pickup are also suspended temporarily.

On-schedule trash collection remains a top priority. During this temporary service interruption, Republic Services customers in Gwinnett County may take their recycling, bulky items or household trash to a [free drop-off site](#).



### Celebrate MLK Day with service to our community

Gwinnett is honoring Martin Luther King Jr. Day with a weekend of service to our community. Join us at Freeman's Mill Park, located at 1401 Alcovy Road in Lawrenceville, for a park cleanup event Saturday, January 15 from 9:00am to noon. [Register here](#).

Visit [VolunteerGwinnett.net](http://VolunteerGwinnett.net) for more opportunities to volunteer over MLK weekend.

### County offers residents a place to warm up on frigid nights

Gwinnett County is activating five warming stations around the county for residents to receive overnight relief during our coldest nights. One of the stations is located here in District 3 at the Centerville Senior Center in Snellville.

The warming stations are activated on evenings when temperatures are expected to drop to 35 degrees or below. Stations will be available from 6:00pm until 7:00am on these nights, and residents who visit the sites will be able to warm up, eat a meal, and get some rest. The County posts notices for evenings that the stations will open on social media and [GwinnettOneStop.com](http://GwinnettOneStop.com).



### New year, new trails to explore

At the start of a new year, many people take the opportunity to



reengage in health and well-being goals. Gwinnett has more than 130 miles of paved and natural surface trails and greenways where you can get some quality exercise. Whether you're interested in walking, hiking, biking, or horseback riding, there's a trail ready to welcome you. Download a copy of Live Healthy Gwinnett's [Walk the Talk brochure](#) for a listing of parks and their trail mileage to get you started on your wellness journey.

### Rowen update

Last November, the Rowen Foundation hosted a town hall meeting at the Dacula Park Activity Center. The event provided information on Rowen's progress and planning for site infrastructure, cultural heritage, and outdoor space in coordination with partners. Visit [RowenLife.com](#) to watch the event recording.

The Rowen Foundation released the University of Georgia's final Historic and Cultural Heritage Report of the Rowen site. This is an important step in the process for the Foundation as the responsible steward of the project's history and vision for the future. The Foundation worked closely with leaders from UGA, the Gwinnett Historical Society, and the County to complete the [report](#).



In line with its mission and vision, and after input from community stakeholders, the Rowen Foundation has adopted a minimum goal of 30 percent participation for small, minority- and women-owned business enterprises in all Rowen Foundation vendor and contractor relationships. Learn more about the [SMWBE initiative](#).

Lastly, the Department of Water Resources and the Rowen Foundation continue their collaboration in planning for the Phase 1 water and sewer infrastructure for the Rowen site. The Rowen Foundation is also working with the Department of Community Services to advance design of a trailhead site within Rowen that would provide regional connectivity. Learn more about the Gwinnett Eastern Regional Infrastructure Project at [GwinnettERI.com](#)

## Special Events and Happenings

Visit [GwinnettCountyEvents.com](#) or follow the County's social media channels to learn about more upcoming events.

### Dart Blaster Challenge

**Saturday, January 8 from 6:00pm to 8:00pm**

Bring your own foam dart blaster and challenge other kids and families on an obstacle course in the gym. Light refreshments will be served. Fee: \$5 per person. Ages 5 and up. [Learn more and register](#). Lenora Park Gym, 4515 Lenora Church Road, Snellville.

### Eating Smart and Being Active

**Every Tuesday and Thursday, January 11 to February 10 from 6:00pm to 7:30pm**

Free! Empower yourself to make healthy choices. Discover how to eat healthy, meal plan on a budget, get active, and more with interactive activities. Ages 18 and up. [After you register](#), you will receive a link to the virtual class.

### Tinkerspace Workshop: Soldering

**Thursday, January 20 from 6:00pm to 7:00pm**

Soldering is a commonly used skill in electronics and metalwork, just as jewelry making. Come to the Centerville branch's learning lab to learn the basics during this introduction to soldering workshop. Registration required. Centerville Branch of the Gwinnett County Public Library, 3025 Bethany Church Road, Snellville.

### Rhythms of the Heart

**Saturday, February 5 from 11:00am to 2:00pm**

Enjoy a delicious, heart-healthy luncheon and some smooth jazz music to celebrate American Heart Month. Explore cardiovascular health, hypertension risk factors, and health screenings from health professionals. Fee: \$15 per person. Ages 18 and up. Please call 678.277.0228 for registration information. OneStop Centerville, 3025 Bethany Church Road, Snellville.



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