



# Gwinnett County Government Communications Division NEWS RELEASE

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## **2020 ADOPTED BUDGET PUTS BOARD'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN FOCUS**

(Lawrenceville, Ga., Jan. 7, 2020) – The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday adopted a \$1.84 billion budget for fiscal year 2020 that addresses a broad spectrum of areas.

The adopted 2020 budget is a 1.1 percent increase compared to last year's budget. It consists of a \$1.44 billion operating budget and \$401 million capital improvement budget, which includes funds from the County's SPLOST program.

"As we crafted this budget, we recognized we were dealing with many diverse needs ranging from public safety to parks to economic development," said Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners Chairman Charlotte Nash. "We allocated funds to try to take care of today's projects, but we also set aside money for long-term projects that will yield benefits years from now. Ultimately, this budget should allow us to continue to provide superior services for our residents and businesses in the immediate and distant future."

The budget was developed based on six strategic priorities set by the Board of Commissioners in March 2019 during its annual planning session: Safe and Healthy Community; Mobility and Access; Livability and Comfort; Strong and Vibrant Economy; Sustainable Government; and Communication and Engagement.

Safe and Healthy Community remains a top priority with funding for a Situational Awareness and Crime Response Center. The budget will also fund equipping the recently constructed alternate E-911 center to provide extra security and support to the main E-911 center. To help the Police Department meet service demands, the approved budget adds 30 more master police officer positions.

The adopted budget includes two more ambulances and three heavy-duty pickups equipped with Advanced Life Support capabilities to the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. The additional vehicles will free up fire engines and ambulances for other emergency calls.

The budget provides funding for an 11<sup>th</sup> Superior Court judge put in place during the state's 2019 legislative session, and includes support positions in the areas of the Clerk of Court,

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District Attorney and Administrative Office of the Courts plus supplementary sheriff's deputies for courtroom security.

The budget addresses the Mobility and Access priority with a five-lane grade-separated interchange on Harbins Road over State Route 316 and a park-and-ride lot at that intersection. It also will explore in detail development of Bus Rapid Transit services in the I-85 corridor, and expand and improve the Gwinnett Place Transit Center to enhance customer experience.

For alternate transportation, the budget will extend the Ivy Creek Greenway to connect the Suwanee Creek Trail to the Mall of Georgia.

As part of the Livability and Comfort priority, the budget will fund the development of Beaver Ruin Park off Satellite Road with wetland trails and boardwalks as well as fund the relocation of the Duluth, Norcross and Snellville libraries. The budget also includes funds to help address homelessness by providing hotel/motel vouchers for emergency shelter providers and completing the buildout of the Norcross Assessment Center to provide homeless shelter beds there.

To support the Strong and Vibrant Economy priority, the budget will create the Gwinnett Entrepreneur Center to aid small business startups by providing resources and services including physical space, education and networking connections. Funding will also be allocated to continue the Infinite Energy Center Expansion and develop the Water Tower @ Gwinnett for water-related research and training.

Funding is also allocated to enhance the County's cybersecurity efforts for the Smart and Sustainable Government priority. The proposed budget also includes a 4 percent pay-for-performance increase to maintain a quality workforce.

For the Communication and Engagement priority, the budget will fund the 2020 elections with several options for early and advance voting and an increase in poll official pay to staff County precincts.

The budget was developed after department directors and elected officials each presented business plans for 2020 to the Chairman's budget review team earlier this fall.

Commissioners held a public hearing on the budget Dec. 12 and accepted comments in writing and online through Dec. 31 before making their final decision.

The adopted 2020 budget resolution and supporting documents are available online at [www.gwinnettcounty.com](http://www.gwinnettcounty.com).

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