

# 10 year overview

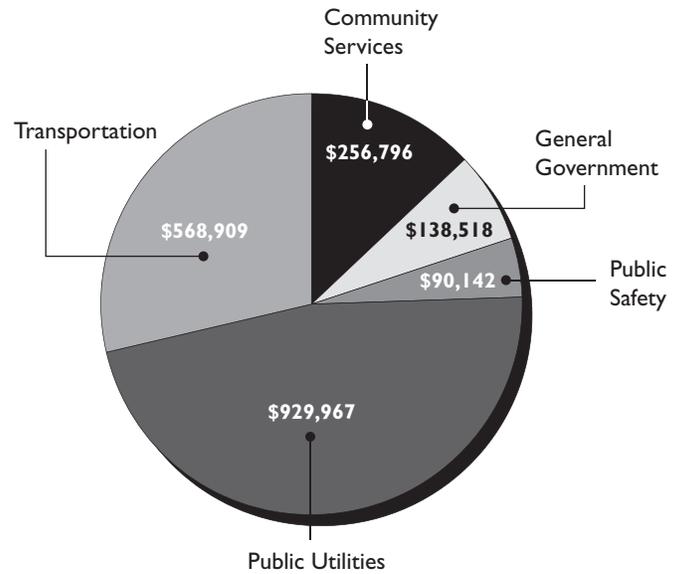
gwinnettcounty



## county finances

- Gwinnett County has received the Distinguished Budget Presentation Award from the Government Finance Officer's Association (GFOA) for the last 10 years.
- The County manages a sophisticated budget review process that has incorporated citizen input for the last nine years with citizen participation on both the operating and capital budget review teams.
- The Operating Budget has more than doubled since 1993 – increasing from \$300 million to \$612 million in 2002.
- The Capital Budget has more than doubled in the last 10 years – increasing from \$306 million in 1993 to \$783 million in 2002.
- Gwinnett County has reduced property tax rates by 26%.
- Rating Upgrades – In 1995, Standard and Poor's, one of the major municipal rating agencies, upgraded the County's bond rating to AA+, making Gwinnett one of only two Georgia counties to have achieved this rating while simultaneously holding the Aa1 rating from Moody's Investors Services. Then the County government achieved an upgrade in its bond rating from Aa1 to the highest quality AAA in June 1997. At the time of this upgrade, Gwinnett was one of only six counties in the southeast and one of only eight county governments in the nation with the prestigious "Triple AAA" rating.
- \$65 million Development Authority Variable-Rate Revenue Bonds for the Civic and Cultural Center Expansion Project, to include a new arena, were issued in 2001.
- Voters approved the issuance of \$75 million in general obligation bonds on November 5, 2002, to finance the Pre-trial Detention Center Expansion.
- Created and staffed a new division to expand the County's planning efforts and support management decisions with financial and economic forecasting and modeling tools.
- Gwinnett County voters approved a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) in 1996 and again in 2000. The 1997 and 2001 SPLOST programs fund capital improvements in the areas of parks and recreation, greenspace, libraries (2001 only), public safety, and transportation.

**10-Year History**  
**Capital Expenditures by Major Category**  
*(Numbers in Thousands)*



## long-range planning

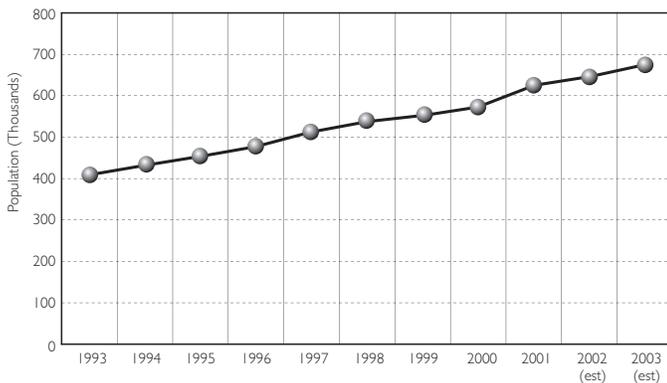
### 2003 Planning Efforts

### Department

• Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan	Community Services
• Individual Park Master Plans	Community Services
• Health and Human Services Needs Assessment	Community Services
• Open Space and Greenways Master Plan	Community Services
• Financial Planning	Financial Services
• Six-Year Forecast of Revenues and Expenditures	Financial Services
• 2020 Comprehensive Plan	Planning and Development
• 50-Year Water and Sewer Master Plan	Public Utilities
• 2020 Comprehensive Transportation Plan	Transportation

## general government

Population of Gwinnett County



## planning and development

- The population of Gwinnett County was 418,000 persons in 1993 and has increased to approximately 654,000 persons in 2002. Over these 10 years, the population has also become more diverse.
- To address the large population increase in numbers and ethnicity, Gwinnett County has conducted numerous studies and approved several innovative ordinances for development and tree preservation, including:
  - Mall of Georgia Overlay District
  - Liberty Heights Infrastructure Study
  - Multi-family Developments Study
  - Extended-stay Hotel Study
  - Assisted Living Study
  - Billboard Study
  - Livable Centers Initiative
  - Open Space and Greenways Master Plan
  - Mixed Use Redevelopment Overlay Task Force
- The Board of Education/Board of Commissioners Task Force committee began meeting in 2002 and is looking at ways to improve communication between the Board of Education and Board of Commissioners.
- Annual updates were made to the Comprehensive Plan with major updates completed in 1992 and 1997. Update to plan in 2001 focused on population figures from the 2000 Census.
- In May 1996, the Board of Commissioners adopted a moratorium on acceptance of new zoning cases until a Zoning Procedures Study was completed.
- In July 1996, the Board of Commissioners reduced the number of rezoning cases by 30% and special use permit requests by 20%.
- A total 8,261 development permits were issued in 1992 and a total 15,678 development permits had been issued by the end of November 2002.

### Automated Inspection Request System adopted in 2000

- Interactive voice response system allows builders and contractors to phone in inspection requests after business hours seven days a week. This system saves approximately 67 man-hours per day

### Buffer, Landscape, and Tree Ordinance adopted in 2000

- Regulates the landscaping, tree planting and preservation, and buffer plantings for development.
- Increases number of trees in parking lots.
- Requires trees to be saved or planted in residential developments.
- Citizens compose the Tree Advisory Committee.
- Inspectors receive training in proper tree care and identification.

### Sidewalks

- Mandatory sidewalks, meeting ADA requirements, were added to the Development Regulation in 2001.
- Sidewalks are now required in all developments.

### Conservation Subdivision Overlay Ordinance approved in 2001

- Requires 40% – 50% open space in subdivisions and a majority of that open space must remain undisturbed.
- Approximately 39 subdivisions have chosen this option since its adoption.

## support services

- Gwinnett County purchased land off Collins Hill Road and SR 316 in 1994 for the site of the future Gwinnett University Center. In 2000, the Board of Commissioners deeded 159 acres to the Board of Regents for the college.
- Completed the addition and renovation of the County's existing fleet facility, increasing from 22,000 sq. ft. to 56,000 sq. ft.
- Completed seven new fuel sites.
- Completed Information Technology and Geographic Information Systems Strategic Plan.
- Replaced voting system in 2002, which involved migrating to a statewide voter registration system and touch-screen voting machines.
- Created and upgraded Gwinnett County's official Web site, [www.co.gwinnett.ga.us](http://www.co.gwinnett.ga.us).
- Completed Gwinnett Civic and Cultural Center's Thomas P. Hughes Ballroom and began construction of the Civic Center Arena.
- Expanded and renovated the Fleet Management Facility.



- Purchased Embury Bank Building and One Justice Square (2001) to house DFACS and “One Stop Shop” permitting.

#### Relocations

- Fire Stations 6 and 11

#### Major Renovations/Reconfigurations Completed

- Renovations within GJAC: Juvenile Court expansion (buildout); new Juvenile Court Unit; third floor Courtrooms (buildout).
- Reconfiguration: Financial Services; Tax Commissioner's Office; ADA compliance project; cafeteria.

*There were numerous additional small contracts, in-house renovations, and tenant relocations.*

## communityservices

#### Park Land Acquisition

- Gwinnett County leads the metro Atlanta area in park land acquisition.
- Over the 10-year period, park land acreage has increased from approximately 1,700 acres to over 7,300 acres. Since 1998, the Board of Commissioners has approved the purchase of more than 4,650 acres of passive park land at a cost of approximately \$87 million.

#### Greenspace

- Approximately 75% of park land purchased over the 10-year period has been designated for passive park land or greenspace. In May 2002, the Board of Commissioners adopted a County-wide Open Space and Greenways Master Plan, which will guide the County's greenspace program in the future.

#### Parks and Recreation Capital Program

- With the approval of the 1997 and 2001 SPLOST programs by the citizens of Gwinnett County, over \$250 million of parks and recreation capital projects have been approved. These projects include the acquisition and development of new parks, major improvements to existing parks, and renovations to many of the County's older parks.

#### Parks and Recreation Program Growth

- Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation was named a finalist for the National Recreation and Parks Association Gold Medal Award in 1999.

#### Meeting Special Needs

- Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation is working to provide services to all Gwinnett citizens, especially youth, with special needs.

#### Parks Safety and Security

- Beginning in 1995, the Board of Commissioners approved

a six-person Park Police Unit. The Park Police have been very active in the enforcement of park rules and maintaining public safety in County parks. This unit has grown to two precincts and 19 officers. In addition, the Park Police have initiated a Neighborhood Park Watch program with Yellow River Park in southern Gwinnett serving as the pilot project.

#### Historic Preservation

- Gwinnett County has promoted the continued efforts to preserve the history of the County. The Gwinnett County Historic Courthouse and Female Seminary (History Museum) building have been maintained and frequently used by community groups. The County initiated a historic preservation grant program to encourage the preservation efforts of Gwinnett County non-profit organizations.
- Partnership formed in 2002 between the University of Georgia and Gwinnett County Board of Education to develop the Gwinnett County Environmental and Heritage Center.

#### Health and Human Services

- Since 1996, the County has constructed and opened three major facilities to assist in the delivery of health and human services to Gwinnett County residents.
- Over 33,000 citizens access those facilities each month for various services.

#### Senior Services

- Each Health and Human Services Center operates a senior center. Services provided by the centers include recreation, transportation, adult day care, meals, and case management, and have increased greatly over the past 10 years.
- Over the last five years, the Meals on Wheels program has grown from 38,000 to 50,000 meals delivered to homebound seniors. Approximately 300 volunteers are involved annually in delivery of these meals.

#### Public Library

- Three new branch libraries opened: Five Forks Branch (1995), Collins Hill Branch (1999), Centerville Branch (2002).
- The Gwinnett Library System was named National Library of the Year in 2000 by the prestigious Gale Group.
- In 1998, the library system reached five million items checked out annually.
- Gwinnett's branch libraries began opening on Sundays, expanding access to citizens.

## public safety

### Police

- Over the last 10 years, 25 police academy classes have graduated from the expanded Gwinnett County Basic Mandate Course of training.
- During the same period, the Gwinnett County Police Department has added 203 sworn officers to its ranks.
- The County has constructed two new delivery service locations in the last 10 years:
  - Southside Precinct on Stone Drive
  - Central Precinct on Satellite Boulevard
- The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc., accredited the Gwinnett County Police Department. The agency achieved reaccreditation in 1998 and 2002.
- The Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police certified the department in 1999.
- The K-9 Unit added an explosives detection dog in 1999.
- The Gwinnett County Police Gang Intervention Team formed at the Westside Precinct in 1999.

### Fire and Emergency Services

- During the 10-year period, 149 employees have been added to the ranks of the Fire and Emergency Services Department.
- The County constructed seven new delivery service locations in the last 10 years:
  - Station 6 (relocation) on Johnson Road
  - Station 11 (replacement) on Live Oak Parkway
  - Station 19 on North Berkeley Lake Road
  - Station 21 on Old Peachtree Road
  - Station 22 on Stone Drive
  - Station 23 on Steve Reynolds Boulevard
- Emergency medical transport capabilities have increased to 15 Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulances. The department expanded its paramedic program to include ALS capabilities on each of its fire engines.
- The County expanded the Fire Academy to include a state-of-the-art burn building for live fire training exercises.

### Corrections

#### *The Gwinnett County Comprehensive Correctional Complex*

- After a detailed feasibility study was completed for the purpose of determining future bed capacity for a new correctional facility, the Board of Commissioners authorized funding for architectural design. The end result was an 800-bed Comprehensive Correctional Complex, which can house up to 512 inmates and 288 work release residents. With a \$3.2 million grant from the state, the total project cost \$21.1 million and was completed in 2002.

## public utilities

- Water pollution control specialists and ordinary citizens from all over the world have visited the state-of-the-art F. Wayne Hill Water Resources Center. Work on a 40 MGD expansion of the center began in 2001.
- In 1998, the state EPD issued to Gwinnett County two permits for 60 MGD additional water reclamation capacity.
- Over the last 10 years, Gwinnett County has had an 85% increase in water customers, but water demand has only increased by 74%. By 2004, the County will have more than twice the intake and water treatment capacity as 1992.

### Increased Water Withdrawal and Treatment Capacity

- In 1992, the County had one intake at 150 MGD and one water plant at 100 MGD. Plant capacity was increased to 150 MGD in 1997. Today, the County has under construction a second water plant (75 MGD capacity) and a second intake (225 MGD capacity), which will be completed in 2004.

### Long-range Master Planning

- Revisions to the 50-Year Public Utilities Master Plan are good examples of long-range thinking and citizen participation. One revision began in 1996 and another in 2001. Through these plans and the water and sewer system modeling, Gwinnett County has been able to make the most strategic investments in the water and sewer system.

## transportation

### Completed Projects

1993	2 major roads	\$8.3 million
1994	2 major roads	\$64.1 million
1995	4 major roads	\$38.3 million
1996	5 major roads	\$53.7 million
1997	7 major roads	\$54.9 million
1998	3 major roads 1 major intersection	\$28.0 million \$1.9 million
1999	5 major roads	\$23.5 million
2000	7 major roads 6 unpaved roads 5 intersection improvements	\$30.6 million \$4.1 million \$5.8 million
2001	8 major roads 1 intersection improvement 5 sidewalks, pedestrian safety	\$29.3 million \$1.1 million \$3.8 million
2002	4 unpaved roads 4 intersection improvements	\$184,000 \$7.7 million

This period represents the continuing implementation of the capital improvements funded through Sales Tax Programs, which include the implementation of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Other significant transportation projects completed in the decade are: the Transit Start-up Plan, construction of the air traffic control tower at Briscoe Field and phased implementation of Taxiway B, and the new DOT District 2 and 4 maintenance facilities.