



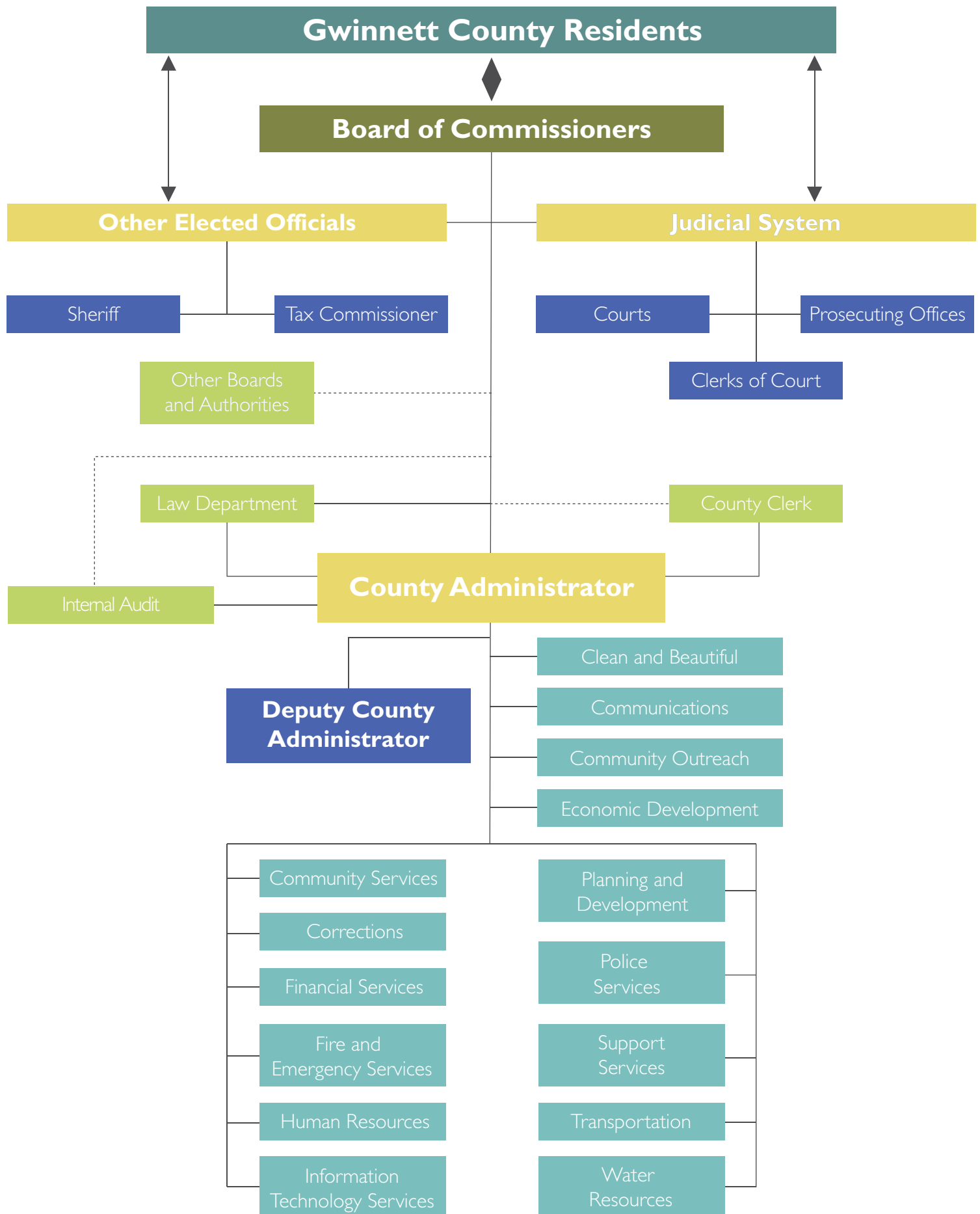
## INTRODUCTION

This section contains a high-level organizational chart and general facts about Gwinnett County and its municipalities.





# Gwinnett County Organizational Chart



## County Administration & Department Directors

### County Administrator

Glenn P. Stephens

### Deputy County Administrator

Phil Hoskins

### County Attorney

Bill Linkous

### Community Services

Tina Fleming, Director

### Corrections

Darrell Johnson, Warden

### Financial Services

Maria Woods, CFO/Director

### Fire and Emergency Services

Chief Casey Snyder

### Human Resources

Scott Fuller, Director

### Information Technology Services

Abe Kani, Director/CIO

### Planning and Development

Kathy Holland, Director

### Police Services

Chief Butch Ayers

### Support Services

Angelia Parham, Director

### Transportation

Alan Chapman, Director

### Water Resources

Ron Seibenhener, Director

## Elected Officials

### Clerk of Court

Richard T. Alexander Jr.

### District Attorney

Danny Porter

### Chief Magistrate Court Judge

Kristina H. Blum

### Probate Court Judge

Christopher A. Ballar

### Sheriff

R.L. "Butch" Conway

### Solicitor

Rosanna Szabo

### Tax Commissioner

Richard Steele

### State Court Judges

Pamela D. South, Chief Judge

Joseph C. Iannazzone

Carla E. Brown

John F. Doran Jr.

Emily J. Brantley

Shawn F. Bratton

Howard E. Cook, Senior Judge

Robert W. Mock Sr., Senior Judge

### Superior Court Judges

Melodie Snell Conner, Chief Judge

Debra K. Turner

R. Timothy Hamil

Ronnie K. Batchelor

Tom Davis

Warren Davis

Karen E. Beyers

Kathryn M. Schrader

George F. Hutchinson III

Randolph G. Rich

K. Dawson Jackson, Senior Judge

Fred A. Bishop Jr., Senior Judge

## Judicially Appointed Officials

### Juvenile Court Judges

Robert V. Rodatus, Presiding Judge

Tadia D. Whitner

Robert Waller

### Recorder's Court Judges

Michael Greene, Chief Judge

Rodney S. Harris

Patricia Muise

### Clerk of Recorder's Court

Jeff C. West

### Court Administrator

Philip M. Boudewyns

## Government Finance Officers Association Statement

The Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) presented a Distinguished Budget Presentation Award to Gwinnett County, Georgia for its annual budget for the fiscal year beginning January 1, 2016. In order to receive this award, a governmental unit must publish a budget document that meets program criteria as a policy document, as an operations guide, as a financial plan, and as a communications device.



This award is valid for a period of one year only. We believe our current budget continues to conform to program requirements, and we are submitting it to GFOA to determine its eligibility for another award.



## History

Gwinnett County was created on December 15, 1818, and named for Button Gwinnett, one of the three Georgia signers of the Declaration of Independence. The county was formed from the combination of land that was ceded to the state of Georgia by the Cherokee and Creek Indians and a portion of Jackson County. Gwinnett was the 50<sup>th</sup> county to be organized in the state. The county currently covers 437 square miles and includes approximately 280,000 acres of land. This makes Gwinnett the 50<sup>th</sup> largest county in the state in landmass.

The home of Elisha Winn, near what is now Dacula, was the first Gwinnett County courthouse. Winn was chosen to select the site for the first county seat and new courthouse. He paid \$200 for a 250-acre lot in the center of the county. Early courthouse business was held in a log cabin until a more permanent structure was built in 1824. The city of Lawrenceville was incorporated and designated the county seat in 1821, when Gwinnett consisted of a cluster of agrarian communities. By 1850, Lawrenceville was a thriving metropolis with a census count of 11,257. In an 1871 fire, the courthouse was burned down, destroying most of the early records and deeds. A new courthouse, built on the square in Lawrenceville, was deemed inadequate after only 12 years, and was replaced by the building now known as the Historic Courthouse for \$23,000 in 1885. It served as the center of Gwinnett government operations until 1988.

A railroad line, the Danville and Piedmont Air Line (now Norfolk Southern), was built through the county in 1871. The railroad induced the founding of new cities: Norcross, Duluth, Suwanee, and Buford. A spur line was run from Suwanee to Lawrenceville in 1881, and another main line, the Georgia, Carolina, and Northern Railroad (now CSX), was built in 1891 through Lilburn, Lawrenceville, and Dacula.

The County's first major industry came in 1868 when the RH Allen Tannery was established possibly at the Elisha Winn house that Robert Allen appears to have been renting before setting up in Buford. Brother Bona soon followed with the Bona Allen Tannery which later purchased the RH Allen Co. after Robert's death. Both tanneries made leather goods, harnesses, whips, shoes, and became famous for handmade saddles. During the Depression of the 1930s when a number of farms began to decline, the tannery employed 2,400 workers. The 1930 Census recorded a County population of 29,087.

Gwinnett County moved into the modern era in 1950 when the U.S. Congress authorized the construction of Buford Dam to provide hydroelectric power, flood control, water supply, navigation, and recreational facilities.

The County constructed its major water and sewer main lines in the 1970s, which proved to be an essential step in preparing for the next decade. For three consecutive years, 1986 through 1988, Gwinnett ranked as the fastest growing county in the U.S. among counties with a population greater than 100,000. During that period, voters approved the 1986 bond issue, and the 1985 and 1988 one-percent special purpose local option sales tax programs, mechanisms which provided funds for significant capital investments. The late 1980s witnessed a dramatic increase in the County's road construction program, the development of a countywide Parks and Recreation program, construction of the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center, renovation of the historic courthouse, construction of new public libraries, and other capital improvements.

Growth slowed during the recessions of 1990 and 2007, but the influx of new residents and businesses continued. The County's population in 2016 stood at an estimated 918,132, up more than 24 percent from 2006. Today Gwinnett County is the second most populous county in the state of Georgia (*Sources: Woods & Poole and U.S. Census Bureau*).



## Population

According to estimates by Woods & Poole, the County's population was estimated at approximately 918,132 in 2016, and its population is expected to reach more than one million by the year 2020.





## Public Safety

The Gwinnett County Police Department has an authorized strength of 783 sworn officers, supported by 323 non-sworn employees. The department has attained accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. since 1993. Approximately 5 percent of more than 18,000 law enforcement agencies nationwide enjoy this prestigious recognition. First in 2013 and again in 2016, the Gwinnett County Police Department is one of the few police agencies nationwide to receive the Accreditation with Excellence Award, the highest level of accreditation. The department's goals in 2017 are to continue to meet the needs of the increasing population and its changing demographics and to ensure fiscal responsibility while providing the latest technology, facilities, training, and equipment.

The Gwinnett County Department of Fire and Emergency Services responded to 78,661 calls for assistance in 2016. The department has 916 personnel and operates 31 strategically located fire stations including 31 engine companies, 11 ladder trucks, 27 Advanced Life Support (ALS) medical units. Specialty teams are trained to respond to situations involving hazardous materials, technical rescue, and swiftwater rescue. The department operates with a service model that integrates fire suppression, emergency medical response, and community risk reduction efforts.

The Department of Corrections operates the Comprehensive Correctional Complex, an 800-bed prison facility that contains 512 beds for state and county inmates classified as minimum or medium security. This complex also contains 288 work release beds for non-violent criminal offenders sentenced to part-time incarceration and parents who habitually fail to pay court-ordered child support. The correctional complex is the only government-owned prison in Georgia that is nationally accredited.

The Gwinnett County Sheriff's Office has an authorized strength of 559 sworn officers supported by 164 non-sworn employees. The office continually strives to maintain the highest law enforcement standards possible and is committed to providing the community with professional, efficient law enforcement through well-trained employees and up-to-date technology. The Sheriff's Office is a state certified agency responsible for constitutional duties that include operation of the county jail, court security, arrest warrant service, civil order service, sex offender registry, family violence orders, and general law enforcement. Additional information about the Gwinnett County Sheriff's Office is available at [www.gwinnettcountysheriff.com](http://www.gwinnettcountysheriff.com).

## Transportation

Gwinnett County's infrastructure includes more than 2,550 miles of roads, with more than 700 signalized intersections. The 2017 Capital Budget and 2018 – 2022 Transportation Capital Improvement Program totals approximately \$540.5 million.

In 2013, the County began construction on the widening of SR 20 from Peachtree Industrial Boulevard to Burnette Trail, the last remaining two-lane section of SR 20 in Gwinnett County. The County purchased right-of-way and easements using state and federal dollars and is also managing the state-funded construction. The project includes widening from two lanes to four lanes with a depressed median. The project will be completed in 2017.

The fourth busiest airport in the state, Briscoe Field, is located on approximately 500 acres in Lawrenceville. The airport is capable of handling all light, general aviation, and most corporate jet aircraft. Two fixed-base operators and three flight schools provide service and instruction at the airport.



In 2017, the airport will continue design work on an extension of the northern taxiway resulting in two full-length parallel taxiways on both sides of the runway, which limits the need for aircraft to cross the runway and decreases the chances of a runway incursion.

In 2017, the department will complete an update to the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and initiate a Comprehensive Transit Development Plan.

Gwinnett County Transit operates four express bus routes during morning and afternoon peak travel times Monday through Friday and five local bus routes all day Monday through Saturday. The express routes allow transit customers to park their cars at County Park and Ride lots and take transit to destinations in downtown and midtown Atlanta and Emory/CDC area. The local routes are complemented by door-to-door *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)* paratransit service for ADA-eligible customers unable to use the local bus. In 2016, 28 new local buses were placed into service, and a new express route to the Emory/CDC area was added. The transit system is operated using 43 express coaches, 28 local buses, and 10 paratransit vehicles. In 2016, the transit system transported approximately 1.5 million riders on express and local buses.



## Education

Gwinnett County Public Schools is the largest school system in Georgia, and it continues to grow. In the 2016 – 2017 school year, the district is serving more than 178,200 students. Of the Gwinnett County residents, one in every five is a GCPS student. The district's enrollment has grown by 13,580 students over the last five years and by more than 2,436 students compared to last year. With approximately 23,000 employees, GCPS is the largest employer in Gwinnett County and one of the largest in the state of Georgia.

GCPS is made up of 139 schools, including 80 elementary schools, 29 middle schools, 21 high schools, and nine other educational facilities/schools – Gwinnett Online Campus; GIVE Center East and GIVE Center West, alternative programs for middle and high school students; the International Transition Center; Maxwell High School of Technology; New Life Academy of Excellence; North Metro Academy of Performing Arts; and two schools for special education. The largest elementary school, Jackson Elementary, supports 1,500 plus students. Norcross High with more than 3,700 students is the largest high school. And, North Gwinnett Middle is the largest middle school with 2,200 plus students. In fiscal year 2017, the average annual cost to educate one student is \$8,466. Gwinnett County operates more than 1,900 school buses that transport more than 129,700 students twice daily and travel more than 23.5 million miles annually.

The vision of GCPS is to become a “system of world-class schools.” The school system is pursuing this vision through the following initiatives: the Gwinnett Teacher Effectiveness System, the Academic Knowledge and Skills Curriculum, the eCLASS online portal, and the Quality-Plus Leader Academy leadership development program.

The academic achievements of GCPS are numerous. Gwinnett's average SAT score for 2016 was 1503, which is 19 points higher than the national average and 44 points higher than the state average. GCPS also topped both state and national ACT averages with an average score of 22.3 out of a possible 36. Gwinnett students for 2016 hit a record number of ACT test takers. Also, more Gwinnett students are taking college-level Advanced Placement (AP) classes. Twenty Gwinnett high schools were recognized as AP Honor Schools. During the Class of 2016's high school career, 6,625 took AP courses. More than 11,600 high school students graduated in 2016 and nearly 83 percent plan to attend college.

GCPS is a three-time finalist of The Broad Prize for Urban Education in years 2009, 2010, and 2014 and a two-time winner in 2010 and 2014, making it one of the nation's top urban school districts. On November 3, 2015, voters expressed their recognition of the importance of Gwinnett schools as a national leader when approximately 75 percent of those who voted approved the E-SPLOST renewal. The continuation of the one-percent tax already being collected on sales will last another five-year period beginning July 1, 2017. The one-percent tax will help fund construction of new schools, renovations to existing schools, and provide technology improvements.

In fiscal year 2017, the total budget adopted by the Board of Education is approximately \$1.98 billion. GCPS is one of only 17 school districts in the nation with a triple-A bond rating. For more information on Gwinnett County Public Schools, go to [www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us](http://www.gwinnett.k12.ga.us).

Gwinnett is also home to several colleges and universities, such as Georgia Gwinnett College, Gwinnett Technical College, the University of Georgia Gwinnett campus, DeVry University Duluth Center, Shorter University – Gwinnett campus, and the Georgia campus of the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. For students interested in instrumental instruction and the recording arts, the Atlanta Institute of Music and Media can be found in Gwinnett off Breckinridge Boulevard in Duluth.

In May 2008, the University of Georgia moved its Gwinnett programs from the campus it shared with Georgia Gwinnett College to its new location near Sugarloaf Parkway and I-85, and changed its curriculum to graduate programs and continuing education only. The University of Georgia's Gwinnett Campus offers 19 graduate credit programs, professional development opportunities, and a small business development center. UGA-Gwinnett is a full service campus conveniently located and thoughtfully designed to help working professionals meet the demands of busy schedules.





Georgia Gwinnett College opened its doors as a four-year college in fall 2006. In fall 2016, enrollment reached 12,052 students at the college. This is the second straight year the college has reported more than a five percent jump in enrollment. Almost 70 percent of GGC students are from Gwinnett, and nearly 100 nations are represented by the student body. GGC's accessibility to a broad and diverse population is a point of pride for the County. For the third year in a row, U.S. News and World Report ranked GGC as the most ethnically diverse regional college in the South, number 10 regionally for public schools in the South, and number 2 in the region for the least student debt. In May 2016, Georgia Gwinnett College was awarded the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce's 2016 Impact Regional Business Award in the education category. This award recognizes organizations impacting economic development and job creation. According to a recent impact study, GGC has had a \$1 billion impact since its opening. The college has created almost 1,300 jobs on campus and 2,900 community jobs. GGC is the ninth largest and fastest-growing institution in the state and recently added a 15<sup>th</sup> bachelor's degree. As the school approaches its second decade of existence, hopes are to expand access to public higher education with an increase in dual enrollment and an increase in graduate degrees.

Gwinnett Technical College opened in 1984 as Gwinnett Area Technical School. The school has significantly expanded its course offerings and made two name changes since then. In 1989, Gwinnett Technical College became one of the first technical schools to earn accreditation with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Per a recent analysis by WalletHub, the facility was the highest-ranked community college in Georgia and ranked in the top 5 percent nationally. With a 99 percent job placement rate, students are guaranteed a high return on their hours of investment. Today, more than 140 different associate degree, diploma, and certificate programs are offered. Many of these programs are ranked in the top 10 in the nation. Also, 42 transfer agreements with other academic institutions are offered. Gwinnett Technical College serves more than 18,000 students annually through credit programs, workshops, continuing education courses, and an adult education program. This makes it one of Georgia's largest technical colleges. Enrollment jumped 14 percent with the opening of a new campus in Alpharetta-North Fulton in January 2016. New or expanded programs in high-demand fields such as engineering and cybersecurity also contributed to the increase. Participation in the Move On When Ready program, a program that allows high school students to earn college credit online and on campus, has increased as well.

The Gwinnett County Public Library (GCPL) system, established in 1935, has grown to 15 full-service branches. The library system received Gwinnett Magazine's *Best of Gwinnett* 2014 award for the Best Place to Take the Kids. In its fiscal year 2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan, the Gwinnett County Public Library system identified the following goals: 1) awareness – increase community awareness of the library and its services; 2) outreach and engagement – develop new resources, services, and strategies for meeting the diverse needs of Gwinnett County residents; and 3) community needs – develop the library's staff and resources to ensure that the library continues to provide relevant service to all residents of Gwinnett County. Inherent to reaching these goals is providing the community with greater choice and flexibility. This means expanding access to library materials, programs, and services with new innovative and creative methods. GCPL has partnered with one of the international library technology companies, Bibliotheca, to become the first library in North America to use a technology that grants customers self-service use of the library outside normal operating hours. This allows the system to expand hours without adding staff time. The pilot program began June 20, 2016 at GCPL's Lawrenceville headquarters branch. The system automatically controls and monitors entry at the building, self-service at kiosks, and access to public computers. Patrons are finding the service great for casual reading and browsing, hold pick-ups, and computer use. Gwinnett County Public Library is committed to meeting the needs of the whole community when they need resources the most.



Programming attendance at Gwinnett County's libraries has seen substantial increases over the years, as shown on page 20 in Section VII. From 2015 to 2016, attendance went from 104,847 to 373,999. This library user metric refers to attendance at library sponsored events, off site events such as author signings, and outreach visits to the schools. Also, new library card registrations are up from 40,781 in 2015 to 141,034 in 2016. This very well could be the result of GCPL and Gwinnett County Public Schools partnering together to extend resources to students. The partnership is called Branch Out and opens up full access to library services for students. The hope is to expand access to many online and physical resources – in particular print and digital – to the school children of Gwinnett County. These resources are not currently available through the schools or school media centers.



## Business Environment

Gwinnett County has been a top job creator in metro Atlanta for the past decade and is home to Fortune 500 and 1000 companies. The County is fast becoming a hub for tech jobs in information technology solutions, health care science and manufacturing. Gwinnett is one of 15 counties located in Georgia's Innovation Crescent, which spans from the Atlanta airport on one end to the University of Georgia in Athens on the other. Gwinnett County is also home to the



corporate headquarters of Waffle House, a well-known restaurant chain famous for its scattered and smothered entrees. In 2016, the County issued 16,746 occupation tax certificates (business licenses). The County's infrastructure, skilled workforce, and business environment is a draw for many companies. These companies and their employees residing in Gwinnett are afforded a lower cost of living compared to other areas, a moderate climate, and numerous recreational opportunities. Gwinnett County also offers easy access to major interstate highways such as I-75, I-85, and I-20 with proximity to Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

Gwinnett is home to almost 900 manufacturing and logistics firms. The County with its bright workforce can accommodate these companies as they look for employees with both soft skills and technical skills. In addition, Gwinnett is a major distribution center for a large number of imports and exports. For example, Aluvision, Inc., a leading Belgium manufacture of modular aluminum exhibit systems, chose Gwinnett as the site for its first U.S. location. Suniva, a leading manufacturer of crystalline silicone solar cells and modules, continues to grow at its Norcross location in Gwinnett County. Introduced as a Georgia Tech start-up and expanded as a top manufacturing company, Suniva's products are found worldwide.

Gwinnett County caters to domestic and international businesses of all sizes and works to promote the industries of advanced communications, information technology, manufacturing/supply chain management, healthcare and life sciences, and corporate headquarters/professional services. Gwinnett's assets in these related sectors are strong, and efforts are made to ensure companies continue to be satisfied with their Gwinnett location, expand their presence in the county, and grow additional local economic opportunities. On January 12, 2017, Kaiser Permanente held its grand opening for a new 185,000 square-foot center located off Duluth's Breckinridge Boulevard. The facility has the potential to create 800 new jobs by 2020 and serve 10 million customers across eight states. Kaiser Permanente invested almost \$51 million in renovations with the expectation of tapping into Gwinnett's skilled workforce, solid infrastructure, and quality of life amenities.

Gwinnett County is also growing its commitment to the research and technology industry. Most notable is the expansion of the research and development corridor area along Highway 316 to the Barrow County line. In addition, the County has approved a mixed-use office and retail development on Highway 316 near Dacula and Sugarloaf Crossing. In 2015, Comcast selected Peachtree Corners as the site for its new regional headquarters which has the potential to add 150 new jobs and relocate 532 existing full-time employees. This became official on May 26, 2016 when their southeast headquarters opened at 6200 The Corners Parkway in Peachtree Corners. The location is a state-of-the-art facility with a high-tech demonstration lab and a Comcast University space for training and continuing education. Comcast is one of Georgia's largest employers. Economic achievements such as these highlight Gwinnett County's skilled workforce and help identify the County as a hub for research, development, and technology in the southeast.

Gwinnett's hospitality and international sophistication, along with affordable real estate and a well-educated labor pool, continues to attract a comprehensive array of diverse companies. According to recent U.S. Census Bureau statistics, Gwinnett's population is nearly a quarter foreign born. And, Gwinnett County is home to more than 500 international companies. Of those, 129 have a headquarters or regional headquarters in the county. According to the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce's senior vice president for economic development and Partnership Gwinnett, Nick Masino, the County is home to 25 percent of Chinese companies and 40 percent of Italian companies in Georgia.

In addition to Gwinnett County's success in attracting businesses to the area, the County has also thrived as a major retail center for more than 30 years. It became home to Gwinnett Place Mall in 1984, the Mall of Georgia (the largest shopping mall in Georgia) in 1999, Sugarloaf Mills (formerly Discover Mills) in 2001, The Forum on Peachtree Parkway in 2002, and The Shoppes at Webb Gin (formerly The Avenue Webb Gin) in 2006. Gwinnett's charming towns also offer a vast array of restaurants, antique stores, boutiques, gift shops, art galleries, consignment stores, and specialty retail establishments. The main streets of these downtown areas also host numerous concerts and festivals.



Tourism is a growing industry in Gwinnett. Occupancy at the more than 100 hotels located in the county was at 71.6 percent for 2016. In mid-June 2016, a new Marriott Courtyard opened near the intersection of Satellite Boulevard and Sugarloaf Parkway. Over the next few years, two more hotels are expected to open. Embassy Suites is under construction just less than a block away, and there are plans for a full-service hotel at the Infinite Energy Center.

Tourism is expected to continue to grow with the County's steady convention business and the large number of professionals who attend. In addition, concerts and sporting events are a natural draw for visitors. According to Georgia Deputy Economic Development Commissioner Kevin Langston, Gwinnett's impact on tourism for the state puts the county among the top 10 in metro Atlanta and along the coastline. More than 12,000 jobs in Gwinnett are tied to tourism. Explore Gwinnett, the county's official travel office, is focused on keeping tourism spending above \$1 billion. The County met this goal in 2016 with visitor expenditures reaching \$1.22 billion. The tourism industry also generated \$35.7 million in local taxes in 2016. It is no surprise that the Gwinnett Tourism Education Program was cited as the "Best Hospitality Marketing Program" in Georgia by the governor, Nathan Deal.

The county is likely to see additional tourism growth as a result of the emerging film industry. The county is home to Eagle Rock Studios Atlanta, one of the largest television production studios under one roof in the United States. Located at Best Friend Road in Norcross, Eagle Rock Studios Atlanta has a direct economic impact on tourism in Gwinnett through trade at local restaurants, hotels, and surrounding businesses. Over the past year more than 80 film/tv/commercial shoots were in Gwinnett. Productions are being filmed at our Parks and Recreation facilities, the County Jail, and the Infinite Energy Center/Arena. The film industry is helping drive development and redevelopment in the County with the multiplier effect. One such example is the television show "Sleepy Hollow" which invests in improvements to a building leased in downtown Lawrenceville while filming. Film crews need living quarters, possible additional retail space, and possible additional studio/educational space. This is helping to fuel what some call a renaissance to the County's downtown areas and improvement districts. Production companies find Gwinnett County's easy access to Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport a plus. The area's versatility is also a major draw. Gwinnett County is home to commuter communities in both outer rural areas and inner upscale city suburbs. The county's landscape is lined with historic downtowns and rustic settings intertwined with new commercial and industrial development. Gwinnett County is where both the new and the old meet for success.





## Recreation and Arts

Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation (GCPR) offers award-winning parks and leisure activities year-round to the young and young-at-heart residents of Gwinnett County. Residents can choose to stroll on a trail, play a sport, learn to swim, take a fitness or pottery class, go on a horseback or bike ride, or explore the county's rich history. There is something for everyone here. GCPR's dedication and commitment to a growing and diverse population was awarded in November 2016 with recognition as the number one park agency in the state serving populations of 150,001 or greater. Noteworthy was Gwinnett's emphasis on community partnerships and volunteer service. GCPR offers facility rentals and partners with 30 volunteer youth athletic associations to offer sports such as baseball/softball, basketball, cheerleading, football, soccer, roller hockey, and lacrosse. Parks and Recreation also partners with healthcare providers and Live Healthy Gwinnett to promote community health and wellness programs, including the Park Rx program and Walk the Talk. In 2016, the division offered 7,459 classes, summer camps, and special events.

Currently GCPR operates 49 parks and facilities that include 179 sports fields, 53 tennis courts, 40 outdoor basketball courts, 24 sand volleyball courts, five year-round and seven seasonal aquatic facilities, eight dog park areas, seven cultural/historic sites, 128 miles of trails, eight skate complexes, 72 playgrounds, picnic areas, pavilions, fishing lakes, and more.

Gwinnett County continues to place a high priority on greenspace, as well as active and passive park land. As of 2016, Gwinnett parkland totaled 9,646 acres for both passive and active parks. Natural resource management took on a renewed focus with the addition of management and staff to support environmental conservation and stewardship of public lands.

The Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center (GEHC) is a unique partnership between the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners, Gwinnett County Board of Education Public School system, and the University of Georgia. In 2016, the GEHC was recognized by Georgia Project WET as its Organization of the Year. With the support of the Gwinnett Environmental and Heritage Center Foundation, this 66,000 square-foot educational center is a multi-use history, culture, heritage, and environment facility which hosted six special exhibits and conducted 210,880 educational contact hours in 2016. The center was Gwinnett County's first LEED-certified green building and has one of the nation's largest sloped vegetated roofs. The County's dedication to restoring Gwinnett's historical buildings and areas can be seen while visiting one of the historic preservation projects such as McDaniel Farm Park, Isaac Adair House, Freeman's Mill Park, and the Yellow River Post Office site. The center staff also coordinates heritage programming at these historic sites.

*ArtWorks! Gwinnett* is a nonprofit organization designed to cultivate arts opportunities in Gwinnett that enhance cultural and economic capital and enrich the county's residents and the business community. The organization is an independent branch of the Partnership Gwinnett community and economic development initiative and supports the County's 2030 Unified Plan.





Gwinnett County offers a wide range of theatre opportunities. Located in Lawrenceville, the Aurora Theatre is recognized for its award-winning dramas, musicals, and comedies. Furthermore, it is acknowledged as Gwinnett's only professional theatre and the second largest professional theatre in the state. Aurora received the Community Impact Award for Performing Arts Organization by *Artworks! Gwinnett* in 2014 and the IMPACT Regional Business Award from the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce in 2015. In late 2016, the theatre received an award from Governor Deal for its significant contributions to the humanities. Downtown historic Norcross is home to the Lionheart Theatre Company. Volunteer operated and non-profit, Lionheart is a leading community dessert

theatre in the metro area. Equipped with seating for 274 and located at the Buford Community Center, the Sylvia Beard Theatre offers an ideal venue for theatrical performances. Duluth is home to the New Dawn Theater and the Red Clay Music Foundry, a 257-seat listening room/music venue. New London Theatre can be found in Snellville and is one of the county's premier community theatres. Each of the facilities allows residents of Gwinnett to enjoy and support the arts within their local neighborhoods.

The Infinite Energy Center consists of a convention center (Infinite Energy Forum), a performing arts center (Infinite Energy Theater), an arena (Infinite Energy Arena), and an arts center (The Jacqueline Casey Hudgens Center for the Arts). Beautiful landscaping and complimentary onsite parking make a visit to any of these facilities an enjoyable one. The complex is operated by the Gwinnett Convention and Visitors Bureau under an operating agreement with Gwinnett County. In June 2016, the Board of Commissioners approved a redevelopment resolution for the center and endorsed Explore Gwinnett's plan to create an atmosphere for the center where people come early and stay late. The six-year, \$950 million SPLOST referendum adopted in November 2016 will contribute \$67.3 million for an expansion of the Infinite Energy Center. County officials note that the center's annual economic effect is at more than \$175 million. Plans are in place to add an outdoor greenspace with an amphitheater, expand conference space, and expand the arena's seating. Property at Meadow Church has been acquired with the goal of using it as an additional access road. Ultimately, growing the Infinite Energy Center will grow economic development in surrounding areas.

The Infinite Energy Forum is anchored by a 50,000 square foot exhibit hall, which is an ideal venue for trade shows, conventions, consumer shows, and corporate meetings. With 28-foot ceilings and column-free exhibit space, up to 300 exhibitors can use the exhibit hall at one time. The forum also has 23 fully adaptable meeting rooms accommodating any size group from two to 2,000. The grand ballroom consists of 21,600 square feet of space, with banquet seating for up to 1,500.

The Infinite Energy Theater is a 708-seat performing arts theater with superior visibility and acoustics and a high-tech sound system. The theater has fully-equipped production capabilities and is ideal to showcase stage productions, musical performances, corporate meetings, and civic events.

The Jacqueline Casey Hudgens Center for the Arts provides a setting with casual elegance or an artistic flair, with outdoor gardens, an art gallery, and a variety of beautiful spaces for receptions, weddings, or other special events. The AI Weeks Sculpture Garden offers 28,000 square feet of enclosed, private outdoor space with a lily pond, waterfalls, koi, and garden seating. And, it has been named an official Wildlife Sanctuary by the Audubon Society.

The Infinite Energy Arena seats up to 13,000 attendees for concerts, sporting events, religious conventions, corporate meetings, and family shows. The arena includes 36 corporate suites, two party suites, and club level seats. Since 2003, the arena has been the home of the Atlanta Gladiators (formerly the Gwinnett Gladiators) of the East Coast Hockey League. As of May 2015, the arena welcomed the National Lacrosse League team, the Georgia Swarm, with an introductory press conference. Their inaugural game was held on January 9, 2016. Now into their second season, the team as part of the NLL (National Lacrosse League) plays 18 regular season games followed by the Champion's Cup Playoffs in May. With corporate suites, high-end sound, and versatile lighting, the venue has a top reputation in the industry among promoters and planners. The venue has hosted such entertainers as Carrie Underwood, Justin Timberlake, George Strait, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Enrique Iglesias, Pitbull, Beyonce, and Eric Clapton. Disney On Ice and the NCAA Women's Gymnastics Championships are also hosted at the campus.







The Infinite Energy Arena has been nationally and internationally ranked as a top venue based on gross ticket sales and attendance. The facility is consistently listed as a Best of Gwinnett recipient, which is voted on by consumers and honors Gwinnett County companies. In addition, the Gwinnett Convention Center received an award in 2013 and 2014 as one of *ConventionSouth's* Readers' Choice winners, which is voted on by more than 6,500 meeting professionals and venue fans. The Infinite Energy Center has established a community outreach program called STARS – Serving Together to Advocate Respect and Service. The program's mission is to contribute to the Gwinnett County community by supporting such organizations as Gwinnett Relay for Life, CURE Childhood Cancer, and Georgia SPCA.

In 2009, the Atlanta Braves' Triple-A affiliate, the Gwinnett Braves, moved to Lawrenceville and began playing at Coolray Field. This state-of-the-art stadium seats more than 10,000 fans and plays host to 72 regular season home games and other events such as concerts, charity events, baseball clinics, and public safety exhibitions. The 2016 season marked the eighth season of play since the stadium opened. Coolray Field has provided the community with hundreds of new jobs, and the Braves have been active with donations and fundraising for local non-profit organizations.

The sports tournament industry is one of the strongest in the county. Every April, Gwinnett County is home to the Champions Tour Tournament for golfers. The three-day tournament is televised in about 200 countries. Some other top events include the Nike Memorial Day Classic, the Adidas International, and the Yong-In Presidential Cup (tae-kwon-do). Sports tournaments contribute tens of millions of dollars in visitor expenditures annually and help raise the county's profile on an international level.

Gwinnett County has often been referred to as "Atlanta's Playground." Within the confines of the county's friendly neighborhoods, one has access to the arts, entertainment, sports, parks/recreation, and great culinary delights. Gwinnett has a little bit of everything to offer its citizens.

## Healthcare

Gwinnett Health System is the parent company of Gwinnett Medical Center, Gwinnett Medical Group, and Sequent Health Physician Partners. GHS employs more than 5,000 associates and has more than 800 affiliated physicians serving more than 400,000 patients annually. The healthcare network has repeatedly received national recognition for clinical excellence and ranks in the top 5 percent in the nation for clinical quality. In 2016, GMC received a four-star rating from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). It is one of only two hospitals in metro Atlanta to receive a four-star rating or better. Only 17 hospitals statewide have received a five- or four-star rating. The rating is indicative of effective and efficient care for non-emergency health care. GMC is a nationally-recognized, not-for-profit healthcare network with acute-care hospitals in Lawrenceville and Duluth. Additional facilities include: the Gwinnett Women's Pavilion, the Gwinnett Extended Care Center, Glancy Rehabilitation Center, outpatient health centers, a surgical center, imaging centers, and outpatient physical, occupational, and speech therapy facilities. On September 2, 2015, Gwinnett Medical Center and Northside Hospital announced plans for a merger.

GMC-Lawrenceville, the system's flagship hospital, provides the county's only trauma center and is one of 16 Level II Trauma Centers in the state. This location is also home to the Strickland Heart Center, where patients requiring electrophysiology, cardiac catheterization, and open heart surgery receive treatment. For more than 20 years, GMC has provided expert cardiovascular disease care.



GMC-Duluth is best known for its Sports Medicine Program, Concussion Institute, Center for Weight Management, and Glancy Rehabilitation Center, which offers inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services. The Concussion Institute is the most advanced center of its kind in the southeast. GMC-Duluth was the first all-digital hospital in north Atlanta. The facility continues to grow and evolve with its surrounding community. One example is offering resources such as Korean-language newspapers to accommodate the growing Korean community in Gwinnett.

Additionally, GMC boasts a graduate medical education program offering family medicine and internal medicine residency programs. This program is designed to address the critical physician shortage in Georgia.

To further accessibility, GMC provides services at the Hamilton Mill location across from Duncan Creek public library in Hamilton Mill Station. This location includes primary care, cardiac care and women's services, and walk-in care and imaging services. In 2016, GMC opened Urgent Care Centers in partnership with ChoiceOne in Sugar Hill and Hamilton Mill. The two facilities offer onsite medication dispensing, along with state-of-the-art imaging technology and equipment. To learn more about how GMC is transforming healthcare, visit [gwinnettmedicalcenter.org](http://gwinnettmedicalcenter.org).

Recognized nationally for patient safety with an 'A' grade by the Leapfrog Group's latest safety report, Eastside Medical Center has a team of 1,200 medical professionals and a medical staff of 500 physicians. Eastside's team serves thousands of patients each year – performing more than 5,000 surgeries, bringing approximately 1,000 babies into the world, and handling more than 60,000 emergency room visits in 2016. Serving the area since 1980, Eastside Medical Center is a 310-bed, multi-campus medical center offering comprehensive medical and surgical programs. Services at the main campus in Snellville include heart and vascular, neuroscience, cancer, orthopedics, spine, 24-hour adult and pediatric emergency, maternity, women's health, surgery, rehabilitation, and sleep medicine services. Eastside Medical Center's South Campus is just 10 minutes away and provides behavioral health care and rehabilitation services. The Wound Center, an outpatient care center dedicated to the treatment of non-healing wounds, moved to a new location at 2295 Ronald Regan Parkway in 2015. A dedicated Breast Imaging Center is located at 1700 Tree Lane in Snellville, which now offers low dose Genius™ 3D MAMMOGRAPHY™ exams. Using advanced breast tomosynthesis technology, Genius™ exams are clinically proven to significantly increase the detection of breast cancers, while simultaneously decreasing the number of women asked to return for additional testing. The Eastside Medical Group practice, Gwinnett Gynecology and Maternity, aims to meet the growing needs of women in Gwinnett County. The Loganville Imaging Center offers an array of imaging services including MRI, CT, mammography, ultrasound, and more. In 2011, the hospital received the American Heart Association's Gold-Plus Stroke Performance Achievement Award for implementing high standards for stroke care. Notably, the Joint Commission has accredited Eastside as a Primary Stroke Center. In addition, the hospital has been designated a Bariatric Center of Excellence. A new patient tower opened in 2013 that features advanced technology including a hybrid operating suite and 48 surgical beds. Eastside Medical Center also offers a spine center and a center for surgical weight loss.

In November 2016, Eastside was made a designated Lung Cancer Screening Center and the hospital's Comprehensive Diagnostic Imaging Program received accreditation by the American College of Radiology for low-dose CT scanning.

Eastside Medical Center will be opening four convenient Urgent Care locations in 2017. The Medical Center will also be opening a brand new 10-bed Emergency Department at the South Campus location on Fountain Drive in April 2017. The South Campus Emergency Department will provide 24/7 care.







In July 2014, a health care provider focused on transitional care and short-term recovery opened in Suwanee. The facility, named Salude, offers 64 private rooms and bathrooms. In addition, offerings at Salude include a 2,800 plus square foot therapy space, 24/7 in room dining, grab-and-go café, and walking paths.

The goal of Salude is to provide an option to short-term and transitional recovery care that focuses on patient comfort and experience. State-of-the-art rehabilitation and medication delivery systems are key to perfecting the recovery process. The maximum patient stay at Salude is 20 days.

High-quality healthcare is a focus of Gwinnett County. Having Salude's first transitional care model located in our county is an asset to our citizens' patient care and recovery.

Northeast Georgia Physicians Group has opened urgent care facilities in Dacula, Buford, Hamilton Mill, and Auburn. These health care providers are all a part of Northeast Georgia Health System (NGHS). Expansion into Gwinnett County offers a large potential patient base. Services include a standalone physicians group as well as access to specialists, ancillary services, and complete hospital services.

Gwinnett County Health and Human Services supports the needs of residents through coordination with private and public organizations. It participates in the planning of the Gwinnett Coalition for Health and Human Services, provides services to Gwinnett's senior citizens, develops and manages one-stop service centers, and manages County funding for nonprofit and other governmental organizations. Numerous health centers throughout Gwinnett County offer medical care to residents who meet income and eligibility requirements.

## Government

Governed by a five-member Board of Commissioners, Gwinnett's local government is comprised of a chairman elected at-large and four commissioners elected by district for four-year terms. The Board of Commissioners appoints the County Administrator. To implement the Board's directives, the County Administrator uses a management team consisting of members of his immediate staff and 12 department directors. The 12 departments that make up the executive side of the county government are Police Services, Fire and Emergency Services, Corrections, Support Services, Financial Services, Community Services, Human Resources, Information Technology Services, Law, Planning and Development, Water Resources, and Transportation. Each department is run by a director who is charged with managing departmental operations in a manner which stresses efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and customer service.

In addition to the internal departments that comprise the executive side of County government, certain services are provided to citizens through constitutional officers and independent elected officials. These external offices are created by the Georgia Constitution or through state law and are listed on page 2 under "[Elected Officials.](#)"

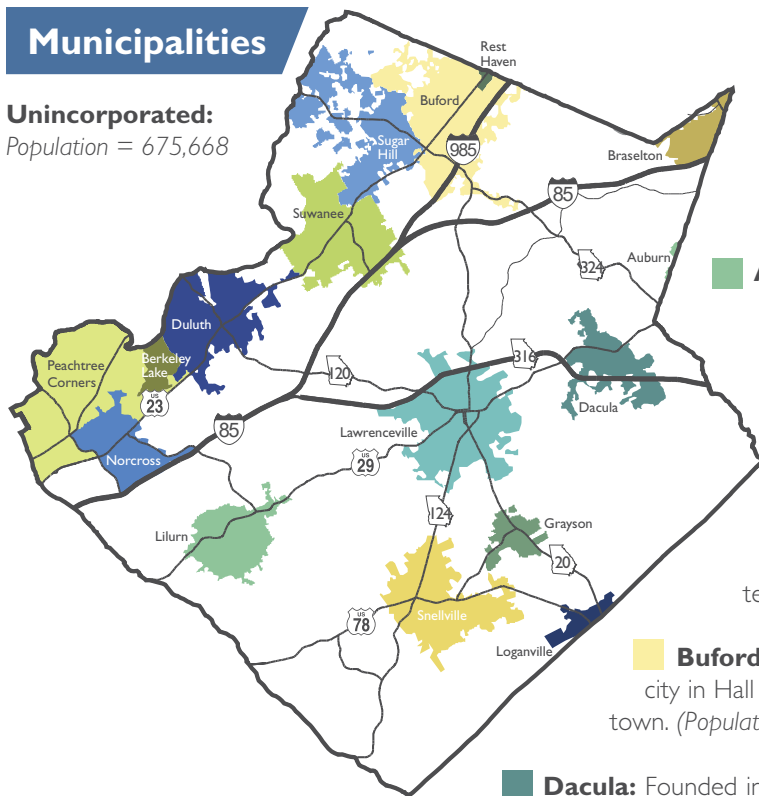
While most administrative County government operations and courts are located in the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center, some departments are located in the Annex Building, One Justice Square, and the Recorder's/Juvenile Court facility. As relocations and additions occur, the existing facilities undergo reconfigurations to better meet residents' needs.



## Municipalities

### Unincorporated:

Population = 675,668



Spanning **437 SQUARE MILES**,  
Gwinnett County has **16 MUNICIPALITIES**  
within its boundaries. In 2016, an estimated  
**918,132 PEOPLE** called Gwinnett home.

Source: Woods & Poole

**Auburn:** Located on U.S. Highway 29 between Lawrenceville and Athens, Auburn became a part of Gwinnett County in 1988, annexing 2,500 acres. (Population = 230\*)

**Berkeley Lake:** Established in 1956, Berkeley Lake is located near the Chattahoochee River and is mostly residential with wooded lots and rolling hills. (Population = 2,024)

**Braselton:** Settled in 1876, part of this municipality is located within Gwinnett where property was annexed in 1989. It also extends into Barrow, Hall, and Jackson Counties. (Population = 3,831\*)

**Buford:** Buford is Gwinnett's northern most city, with a small portion of the city in Hall County. It was founded in 1872 and originally developed as a railroad town. (Population = 12,700\*)

**Dacula:** Founded in 1891, a branch of the Seaboard Coastline Railroad was constructed from Dacula through Lawrenceville to Duluth. Elisha Winn is one of Gwinnett's early leaders, and his Dacula home served as a temporary first courthouse. (Population = 5,330)

**Duluth:** In the early 1800s, this town was part of Cherokee Indian territory. In 1821, it developed as the town of Howell Crossing, and in 1873 the town name was changed to Duluth following completion of the railroad. (Population = 29,193)

**Grayson:** Founded in 1880, Grayson is another city given birth by the railroad. The city was previously known as Berkely. (Population = 3,147)

**Lawrenceville:** Incorporated in 1821, Lawrenceville is the county seat. (Population = 30,493)

**Lilburn:** In 1892, a railroad stop known as the town of McDaniel developed. Renamed Lilburn in the early 1900s, this city is named after Lilburn Trigg Myers who was the general superintendent for the Seaboard Airline Railway. (Population = 12,655)

**Loganville:** This town also started as a branch of the railroad in 1898 and is another city that Gwinnett shares with an adjoining county. (Population = 2,732\*)

**Norcross:** The second oldest city in Gwinnett, Norcross was founded as a resort town for wealthy Atlantans. Chartered in 1870, Norcross has an area of 112 acres listed in the U.S. Register of Historic Places. (Population = 16,634)

**Peachtree Corners:** Peachtree Corners is the newest city in Gwinnett County. The Georgia General Assembly passed legislation on March 16, 2011, to hold a referendum for voters to consider the incorporation of the City of Peachtree Corners. The referendum passed on November 8, 2011. (Population = 40,978)

**Rest Haven:** Incorporated in 1940, Rest Haven is one mile and a half wide. (Population = 34\*)

**Snellville:** In 1885, Snellville was founded by Thomas Snell and James Sawyer. It is located on U.S. Highway 78 in the southeastern corner of the County. (Population = 19,733)

**Sugar Hill:** This town's name is said to have come from an incident in the 1800s when a freight wagon traveling down a steep hill spilled its load of sugar. The city was chartered in 1939. (Population = 21,747)

**Suwanee:** Beginning as an Indian village and later developed as a railroad stop, Suwanee was officially founded in 1837 with the establishment of the post office. (Population = 18,694)

\*Population within Gwinnett County

Source: U.S. Census Bureau's July 1, 2015 population estimates