LAW DEPARTMENT

2018 Business Plan
Our Mission

The mission of the Law Department is to deliver high-quality legal services at a reasonable cost to Gwinnett County and its citizens, elected officials, managers, staff, authorities, and related organizations.
Our Values

- Excellence
- Ethics
- Service
- Accountability
- Efficiency
Staffing Levels

2017 Budgeted Positions: 16
• 10 attorneys
• 6 support staff

2018 Budgeted Positions Requested: 17
• 10 attorneys
• 7 support staff
BOC Priority

**Smart & Sustainable Government**

**Tactic:**
- Experienced, cost-effective in-house staff
  - Periodic review of strategic plan
- Acquire specialized continuing legal education
  - Keep current on technology
Tactic:

- Proactively engage with public safety departments during strategic planning sessions
- Assist with legal aspects of Water Resources projects
Tactic:
• Assist Transportation with SPLOST land acquisitions for roads and bridges
  • Assist Transportation and Planning & Development with small cell equipment regulation
• Assist with legal aspects of Water Resources projects
BOC Priority

Communication & Engagement

Tactic:
• Assist Elections with meeting goal to require bilingual election materials
  • Proactively engage with County departments
• Develop Law Department management profiles on internet
BOC Priority

**Tactic:**

- Assist with economic redevelopment efforts
- Assist with SPLOST projects for Community Services, Support Services and Transportation
- Develop and/or revise ordinances with the best interests of the County in mind
Tactic:

- Assist with legal aspects of SPLOST projects for new parks and improvements to existing parks, libraries, roads and bridges, fire stations
- Assist with legal aspects of Planning and Development uses
2017 Business Challenges

• Urgency of Assignment Requests
  – Legal issues continue to demand time-sensitive responsiveness
  – Increase in Critical Path assignments
Critical Path Matters Received

- Critical Path Matters
- Legislative Matters
- Non-Legislative Matters

- Linear (Non-Legislative Matters)

Year: 2013 - 2017 (projected)

- 2013: 352
- 2014: 348
- 2015: 393
- 2016: 386
- 2017 (projected): 316

Legislative Matters:
- 2013: 4
- 2014: 7
- 2015: 9
- 2016: 238
- 2017 (projected): 180

Non-Legislative Matters:
- 2013: 4
- 2014: 7
- 2015: 9
- 2016: 465
- 2017 (projected): 610
2017 Business Challenges
(Continued)

• Increase in Number of Legal Matters Received
  – Increase in Real Estate Acquisitions, including Condemnation matters
  – Increase in cases being appealed to higher courts
  – Increase in specialized litigation
All Matters Received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>All Matters</th>
<th>Legislation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2057</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2220</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2164</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2670</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017 (projected)</td>
<td>2602</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignments Received

- **Assignments**
  - 2013: 397
  - 2014: 758
  - 2015: 653
  - 2016: 1024
  - 2017 (projected): 1100

- **Legislation**
  - 2013: 4
  - 2014: 7
  - 2015: 9
  - 2016: 238
  - 2017 (projected): 180
Contracts Received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Contracts Received</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>705</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>784</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>817</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1032</td>
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<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>914</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(2017 (projected))
Litigation Matters Received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Tax Appeals</th>
<th>Litigation</th>
<th>Claims</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>93</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>294</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017 (projected)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tax Appeals, Litigation, Claims
Proactive Planning Sessions Attended With Departments

- 2013: 194
- 2014: 225
- 2015: 474
- 2016: 500
- 2017 (projected): 594
• Complexity of Legal Issues
  – Legal issues continue to increase in complexity and intensity
  – Increase in need for outside counsel for specialized litigation representation
Value of In-House Law Department

- Proactive Legal Advice
- In-depth knowledge of the goals of the organization
- Frequent interaction with key personnel
Value of In-House Law Department

- Availability for special projects that benefit the County
- Immediate availability for critical path matters
Avg. Hourly Rate Comparison
O.C. vs. Law Dept. Attorneys

2016 Outside Counsel Avg. Hourly Rate: $177.52
2016 Staff Attorney Avg. Hourly Rate (includes estimated overhead costs): $117.20
Annual Cost Comparison
O.C. vs. Law Dept. Attorneys

2016 Outside Counsel ($177.52/hr; 2080/yr) $369,241.60
2016 In-House Attorney ($117.20/hr; 2080/yr) $243,776.00
2018 Budget Request

• 2017 Adopted Budget: $2,317,029

• 2018 Budget Request: $2,387,672

• 2018 Decision Package: $54,413

• 2018 Total Budget Request: $2,442,085
• New Legal Associate II Position Request
  – Understaffed in administrative area due to prior reduction in force and added attorney position
  – Increase in specialized and appellate litigation
  – Increase in number of matters received
  – Increase in critical path matters
• New Legal Associate II Position Outcome
  – Increased productivity
  – Proactive management of office
  – Supports Gwinnett County’s “Smart and Sustainable Government” priority
Ongoing Objectives

• Ensure that a full range of high-quality legal services continues to be provided

• Process the workload in a manner responsive to the needs of our clients

• Provide customer service consistent with Gwinnett County’s principles
• Proactively assist Departments in strategic planning

• Remain current in legal skills, knowledge, training, and technology
2017 Major Legal Issues

• Economic development efforts and revitalization
• Major land transactions
• Joint City/County SPLOST projects
• Bilingual (Spanish) election materials mandate for Gwinnett County
2017 Major Legal Issues
(Continued)

• Small cell equipment regulation
• Fireworks legislation
• 911 legislation and litigation
• Adult entertainment litigation
• Resolution of donation bins litigation
2018 Objectives

• Transition into the newly remodeled departmental space which is currently in progress

• Implement new filing system after completion of new construction
2018 Objectives
(Continued)

• Encourage content-specific continuing legal education for attorneys and support staff as needed
• Continue cross-training efforts
• Complete litigation templates for attorneys
2018 Objectives (Continued)

- Develop management profiles on the Law Department’s website
- Continue volunteer program
2018 Legal Issues

- Continue with economic development efforts and revitalization
- Continuation of Joint City/County SPLOST projects
- Continuation of major land purchases for special projects
2018 Legal Issues

- Continuation of small cell equipment regulation
- Ongoing increase in litigation requiring use of outside counsel
Future Goals – 5-Year Plan

- Possible Increase in Staffing Levels
- Need for Additional Office Space
- Other Updates to Policy Manual
- Attorney and Staff Development
- Cross-training
- Increased Commissioner/Official Contact
Questions?