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Dear Homeowner,

As a resident of Gwinnett County, you know there is always a lot going on in the community.

Gwinnett County Government would appreciate your help keeping your neighbors informed by sharing the following information through your homeowner association newsletter, website, and emails and by talking to your friends and family.



What's new on TVgwinnett?

Gwinnett County brings you the latest news and happenings about your community through Eye on Gwinnett, our bi-weekly news program.



What you'll see in this episode:

- Property tax bills going out by August 15
- Graves Park to receive new soccer field, pavilion and other improvements
- Gwinnett County Transit to test door-to-door service in Snellville
- County lifeguards win top honors in state competition
- Youth commissioners learning Gwinnett operations

County Commission approves contract to expand transit, sets voter referendum date

The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners on Wednesday approved a contract with the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority to operate and expand Gwinnett's transit system in accordance with the recently approved Connect Gwinnett Transit Development Plan.

The board also passed a motion putting the contract on the ballot in a March 19, 2019, special election for voter consideration.



Voters in March 2019 will be asked to say yes or no to the contract negotiated with the Authority. As dictated by state law, the ballot question shall read: "Gwinnett County has executed a contract for the provision of transit services, dated as of August 2, 2018. Shall this contract be approved? YES ___ NO ___."

If voters approve the contract, a 1 percent sales tax then would be assessed starting July 1, 2019, to help cover the cost of operations, improvements, and equipment. The sales tax proceeds combined with federal funds and fare box collections will fund the transit expansion. Bonds are also allowed and can help spread the costs for large capital projects. The bond debt would be repaid over time with proceeds from the transit sales tax.

Under the contract, future transit projects would follow the Connect Gwinnett Transit Development Plan, which took into account input from residents, businesses, a technical committee of experts, stakeholders, planners, and others. The transit plan was approved by the Board of Commissioners on July 17 of this year.

Bond rating agencies give Gwinnett County top grades for management, fiscal policies

All three bond rating agencies have once again given Gwinnett County a AAA/Aaa bond rating, the highest possible, placing Gwinnett in the top 2 percent of counties in the nation for fiscal soundness. This marks the 21st consecutive year Gwinnett has held this distinction.

The stellar rating allows the County to issue or refinance bonds at favorable rates, which reduces the interest paid by taxpayers.

Gwinnett County is one of fewer than 50 counties of approximately 3,000 counties nationwide to have a Triple AAA bond rating. The latest rating came after the County's financial management practices and financial results went through intense review by analysts from S&P Global, Moody's Investors Service, and Fitch Ratings.

In determining a government's ratings, the rating agencies do a thorough review of a government's finances, operations, and policies. The rating review came as the County, through its Development Authority, seeks to go to the bond market to issue \$96.1 million in bonds to fund construction at the Infinite Energy Center, including expansion of the conference center, a new parking deck, and other improvements on the campus. This is the first construction bond issue by Gwinnett County in nearly 10 years.

School starts Monday so don't pass stopped buses and watch for kids at bus stops



Gwinnett County Public Schools kicks off the 2018-2019 school year on Monday, **August 6**, and motorists are advised to give GCPS buses plenty of room and time to pick up and drop off students before and after school.

Watch for amber and red flashing lights that indicate a stopped school bus. GCPS has placed cameras on about 300 buses to photograph drivers who illegally pass school buses. When the school bus amber or red lights are flashing, the system automatically detects vehicles passing the stopped school bus and records the violation. The violator will receive a citation in the mail.

In spring 2018, GCPS bus drivers conducted a one-day count of vehicles that passed stopped buses. They counted more than 2,000 violations in just one day.

For more information, please see our video on [school bus safety](#).

Gwinnett to offer free disposal of household hazardous waste on August 11

Household hazardous waste materials can potentially contaminate water resources and pollute the air.

To help protect the environment and ease the burden on Gwinnett residents, the County's Fiscal and Solid Waste Management Division, Department of Water Resources, and Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful are partnering to host the County's first Household Hazardous Waste Recycling Event on **August 11**.



Residents can drop off five containers each of household hazardous waste for free. The event is limited to Gwinnett residents and proof of residency may be required. Materials accepted at the

event include cleaners, batteries, fluorescent light bulbs and ballasts, lawn care products, oils, paints, and pesticides.

The event runs from **9:00am to noon** at the Department of Water Resources Central Facility at 684 Winder Highway in Lawrenceville. For a full list of acceptable items, visit www.gcsolidwaste.com.

2040 Unified Plan maps, policies on display at open houses August 13 through August 30



The 2040 Unified Plan and the Future Development Map are scheduled to be available for viewing, review, and public feedback during a series of community open house sessions from **August 13 to August 30**.

The Department of Planning and Development and its consultant Pond & Company will present draft goals or themes relating to economic development, redevelopment, transportation, and other issues along with policies to help achieve those goals. This presentation is a big-picture look at how the county could develop over the next 22 years.

There will be maps of various areas of the county that will include broad descriptions of uses allowed, such as residential and commercial levels and possible transportation improvements. The community open houses will also feature displays showing the Needs and Opportunities, recommendations, policies, and Future Development Map that will be included in the plan. This input process is not just limited to the general public. Gwinnett County has gained input from elected officials, interviews with residents, business and community leaders, various committees, County sponsored booths at community events, and more.

To view the dates of the community open house meetings and learn more about the plan, visit www.Gwinnett2040UnifiedPlan.com and follow Gwinnett 2040 Unified Plan on Facebook. Email questions to gwinnett2040@gwinnettcountry.com.

Gwinnett animal shelter offering August adoption specials, including Free Fridays

The Gwinnett County animal shelter is offering a \$20 adoption special in August for dogs and cats ready to take home. Specials also include free adoptions every Friday.

Adoption fees are typically \$90 for dogs and \$30 for cats. Many dogs and cats up for adoption at the shelter have already been examined by Animal Welfare staff veterinarians, vaccinated, and neutered or spayed, so they are ready to go home on the day of adoption.



The shelter is extending its hours on Thursdays from 6:00pm to 8:00pm into the fall. Ice cream socials will be held on the last Thursday of each month through October where visitors can meet available pets and enjoy free ice cream.

Gwinnett Police accepting applications for Citizens Police Academy



There's still time for apply for the next Citizens Police Academy, which will run **August 21 to October 11**. Classes will take place on Tuesday and Thursday nights from 6:30pm to 8:30pm. Residents who participate in the academy will have a behind-the-scenes look at their police department. Topics covered during the academy include crime prevention, E-911, criminal investigations, SWAT, crime scene investigations, and more.

Applications are due by **August 17**. To apply, visit the Citizens Police Academy website at www.gwinnettcpa.com. They can also be submitted by mail to P.O. Box 602, Lawrenceville, 30046, or by email to policevolunteers@gwinnettcountry.com.

Gwinnett County Bicentennial Moment - Graves at the Gwinnett Historic Courthouse

The bodies of eight militia soldiers killed fighting the Creek Indians are buried in the northwest corner of the Gwinnett Historic Courthouse.

In the early 19th century, white settlers in Gwinnett County had pushed the native Creek Indians across the Chattahoochee River. In 1836, the Creeks began attacking settlements along Georgia-

Alabama border. Georgia Governor William Schley called for volunteers. Capt. Hammond Garmany and his mounted volunteers left Lawrenceville on May 26, 1836, and was mustered into the United States Army after arriving June 3. A few days later, 25 militiamen were dispatched to a fort about 40 miles south of Columbus.

On June 9, 1836, the militia heard shots and went to investigate. They found the Creek were about to attack. During the ensuing battle, Garmany was seriously wounded. Reinforcements arrived and attacked the Native Americans, killing 30 or more. Eight of Garmany's company were killed and four wounded. The dead Gwinnett County volunteers were buried with military honors in a common grave on February 17, 1837, in the northwest corner of the courthouse yard. In 1840, a marble monument was erected on the site.

Visit the Gwinnett Historical Society webpage at www.gwinnettths.org to learn more about Gwinnett County history.

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