



GWINNETT COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Kirkland Dion Carden, District 1
Ben Ku, District 2
Jasper Watkins III, District 3
Marlene M. Fosque, District 4

Official
Strategic Planning Session Minutes
March 25 – 26, 2021

Present: Nicole L. Hendrickson, Kirkland D. Carden, Ben Ku, Jasper Watkins III, Marlene M. Fosque

The Strategic Planning Session was facilitated by Mara Shaw and Nancy Farage with the University of Georgia (UGA) Carl Vinson Institute of Government and held at Hotel Indigo, 500 College Avenue, Athens, Georgia. The session covered the development of a Mission, Vision, Values statement as well as strategic priorities. No official action taken.



**UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA**

**Carl Vinson
Institute of Government**

**Gwinnett County Board of
Commissioners**

Strategic Planning Session

March 25 - 26, 2021

Athens, Georgia

Welcome and Overview

Nicole Hendrickson



Mara Shaw



Carl Vinson
Institute of Government
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



Carl Vinson Institute of Government
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

Strategic Planning Session Agenda – Day 1

9:00 am	<i>Strategic Planning Session Welcome, Overview, and Introductions</i>
9:30 am	<i>Collaborative Leadership</i>
10:15 am	<i>Break</i>
10:30 am	<i>Facilitated Group Discussions</i>
Noon – 1:30 pm	<i>Lunch</i>



Day 1 Agenda - Continued

- 1:00 pm *Roles and Expectations Discussion*
- 2:45 pm *Break*
- 3:00 pm *Review and Discussion of Affirmative Goal Statements*
- 4:30 pm *Adjournment for the Day and Hotel Check-in*
- 6:00 pm *Dinner at the Hotel*



Strategic Planning Session Agenda – Day 2

8:30 am	<i>Breakfast</i>
9:00 am	<i>Welcome and Day 1 Debrief and Discussions</i>
9:30 am	<i>Review of Six Priority Areas</i>
10:30 am	<i>Break and Hotel Check-out</i>
10:30 am	<i>Continue Priority Area Review and Updates</i>
Noon	<i>Lunch</i>
1:00 pm	<i>Closing Thoughts, Forward Focus, Adjournment</i>



Special Instructions for Participants

- Always maintain required social distancing and adhere to all safety and health requirements
- Handouts have been reduced to just the agenda
- Each participant has individually sanitized and packaged supplies
- Place all flip chart pages in the middle of your tables for collection and posting
- Mara, Nancy, and Caitlin will collect all flip chart pages for posting
- Evaluations will be emailed to you with instructions by Tammy at the end of the second day.
- Attendance forms have been completed for each participant



Facilitator Roles

- Keep the conversations focused
- Make sure everyone is heard
- Help the group work towards consensus
- Keep a written record (of consensus agreements)
- Answer questions



Questions



Introductions

- *Name*
- *Position*
- *What will make this strategic planning session a success?*



Collaborative Leadership and Leadership Relationships



Cooperation and Collaboration

Cooperation

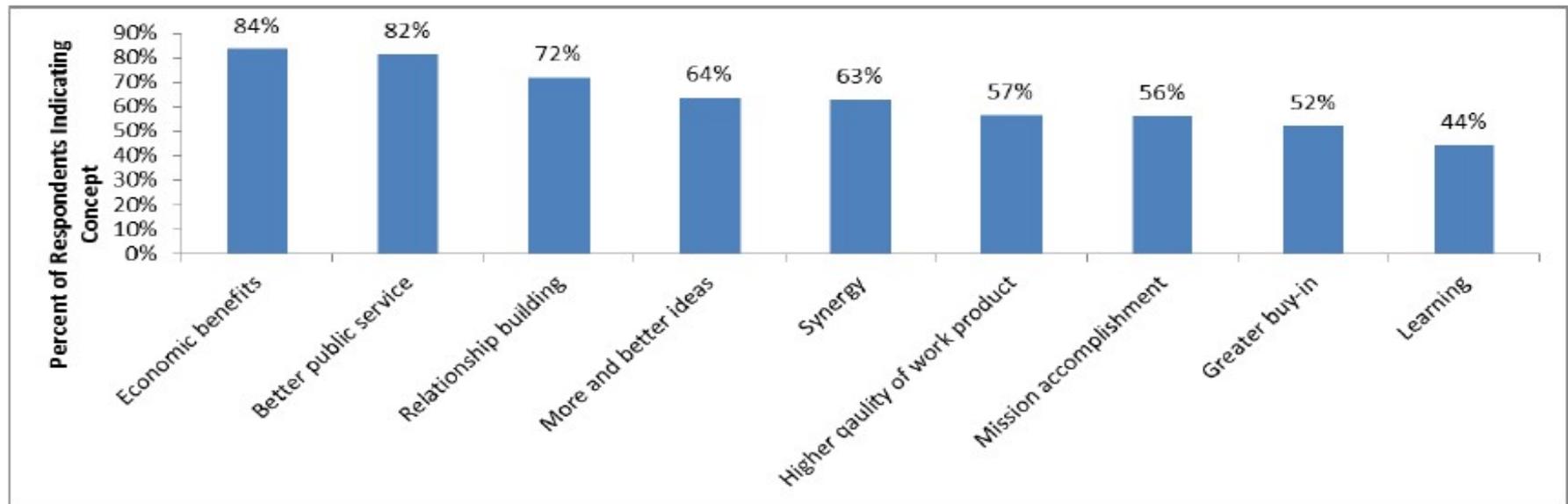
- **Coordinate existing resources to address common issues**
- **Roles, communication, and decision making are relatively formal**
- **Shared leadership within a central body**
- **Focus is on issues**
- **Group decision making in central and subgroups**

Collaboration

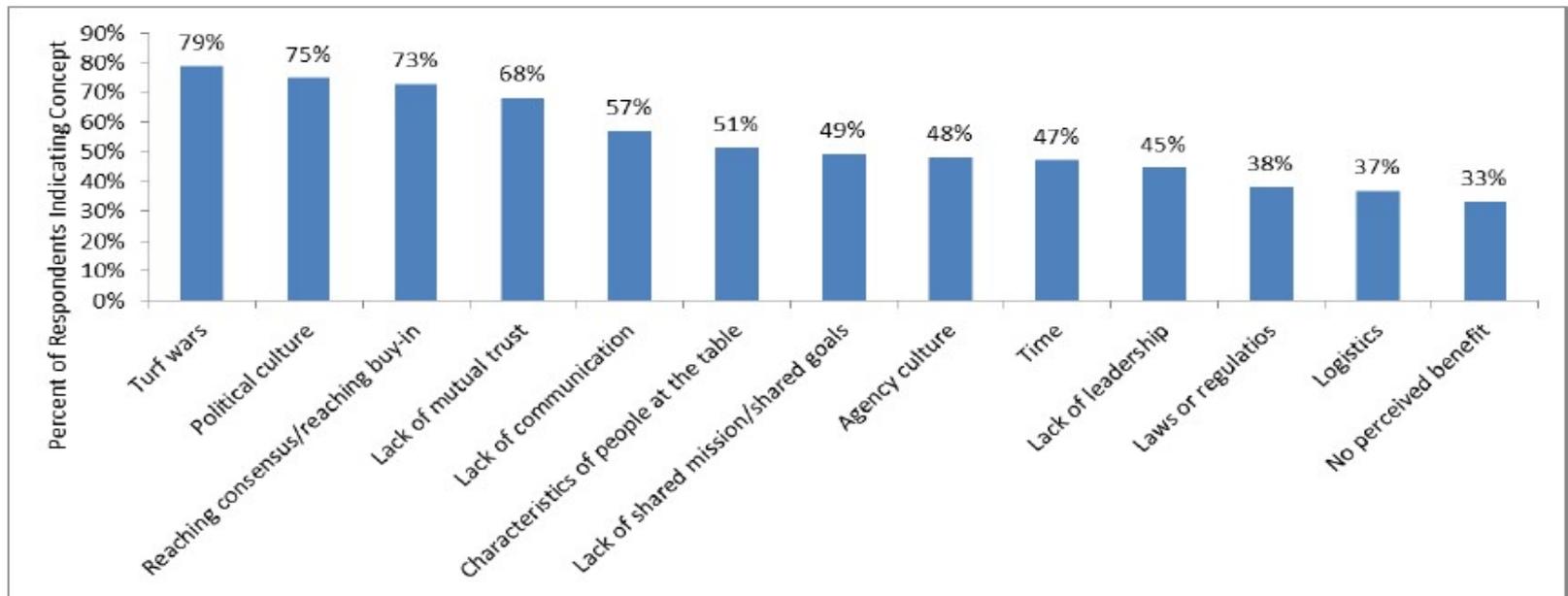
- **Joint initiative, shared concerns, common goals**
- **Intentional relationship ~ choose to work together**
- **Diverse, autonomous actors**
- **Mutual decision making and goal setting**
- **Preserve independence of each party**
- **Shared risk and reward ~ accomplish a shared outcome no party can accomplish alone**



Positive Results of Collaboration



Challenges to Collaboration



How Collaborative Leaders Make Collaboration Work



1. Lead through relationships
2. Achieve goals through others
3. Listen carefully to what is being said (and not said)
4. Look for win-win solutions
5. Pull rather than push
6. Make collaborative decisions
7. Invite people to “own” vision and values
8. Bridge differences
9. Share power and resources
10. Demonstrate integrity and credibility
11. Tolerate complexity, ambiguity, uncertainty
12. Value dialogue and diversity
13. Respect and trust participants
14. Create “public” space big enough to hold everyone
15. And.....



Leadership Competencies

- *Practices Self Reflection*
- *Builds Trust and Relationships*
- *Inspires Through Vision*
- *Is Inclusive*
- *Thinks Strategically*
- *Is Collaborative*
- *Leverages Technology*
- *Facilitates a Diversity of Perspectives*
- *Practices High Ethical Standards*



Why Do this Together?



Collaborate Because It Makes Your Community Better



It is not enough to ask whether government is providing good service. Instead, we must ask ourselves whether we are advancing democracy by serving as a catalyst to bring resources, people, and plans together to accomplish our common goals.



Transformational Change

Transformational change is a process designed to create significant change in culture and work processes of an organization and produce significant improvement in performance.

Factors that lead to transformational change might include a change in the physical environment, demographics, cultural factors, economic or political factors.

- **Reflect on your current efforts and list any additional factors that might be leading to transformational change in your work.**
- **Are you inspiring transformational change in those efforts?**
- **What systems/processes/programs do you need to put in place to support transformational change?**
- **Are you being collaborative with your efforts?**



Challenges to Transformational Change

- You must be able to get individuals or groups to see what they don't want to see
- Individuals or groups may be resistant to change
- Your role is to “build a space” in order to build capacity in these individuals and groups
- You cannot portray yourself as the answer to the problem. It requires opportunities for inclusion of outside perspectives
- Success requires you to exercise collaborative leadership
- You cannot do the important work by yourself or in isolation



Exercising Adaptative Leadership – Leading to Transformational Change

- Adaptive leadership is about change that enables the capacity to thrive
- Adaptive leadership requires us to “upgrade our personal operating systems” and not just “download an app” to solve a problem
- Adaptive work generates stress and adaptive leaders must strike a delicate balance between having people feel the need to change and having them feel overwhelmed by change
- Three key tasks a leader must attend to as an adaptive leader
 - Must create a safe space to do the work – Holding Environment
 - Responsible for direction, protection, order
 - Must have presence and poise – regulating distress



Defining Leadership Relationships



- **With partners** – Exercise leadership with others. Don't take risks if not necessary.
- **With the opposition** – Helps you to understand their story, so you can move them toward consensus.
- **With casualties** – Adaptive and transformational change creates casualties. People are watching how you treat them as they exit.
- **With senior authority** – Our higher authority—who we are accountable to when impacting “the system.”
- **With trouble makers** – We have to be willing to engage them. They aren't going away.
- **With ourselves** – What am I doing that is getting in the way?



Questions/Comments/Thoughts



Who Are Constitutional Officers?

- County Constitutional Officers are enumerated in Ga. Const. art. IX, § 1, ¶ III (a):

"The clerk of the superior court, judge of the probate court, sheriff, tax receiver, tax collector, and tax commissioner, where such office has replaced the tax receiver and tax collector, shall be elected by the qualified voters of their respective counties for terms of four years and shall have such qualifications, powers, and duties as provided by general law."



Q: What makes constitutional offices different from other county offices and why are they afforded this increased protection?

A:

- Constitutional offices, for the most part, have been in existence since the founding of the State and their duties are prescribed by the constitution and State law.
- Creating political independence between the constitutional officers and the board of commissioners allows voters to have more direct influence over the persons providing critical services and ensures political independence.





BUILDING AND MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS



Typical Sources of Conflict

- Personnel
- Compensation
- Procurement
- Facilities and Equipment
- Budget



Is Conflict Inevitable?



Real Steps That Can be Taken to Avoid Disputes and Foster Strong Working Relationships

Communication!
Communication!
Communication!



Seven Key Aspects of Successful Cross-sectoral Collaboration

- Establish a connection-based purpose that engages people
- Have a clarity of purpose
- Ensure the mission, strategy and values of the sectors are congruent
- Develop a relationship that creates value for multiple parties
- Develops and maintains effective communication between all parties involved
- Views the alliance as a dynamic relationship involving a process of continuous learning
- Based the partnership on a long-term commitment involving deep relationships



State of the County Address

- Challenges We Face:
 - *More equitable and just Gwinnett*
 - *Transit issues*
 - *Healthcare disparities*
 - *Homelessness and housing insecurity*

How do we address these challenges through the lens of the Gwinnett Standard?

How do we address these challenges through collective and collaborative efforts?



State of the County Address

The Gwinnett Standard

Connections that unite every facet of the community so that excellence permeates throughout the county!

- Overcoming tough challenges through:
 - Extending grace
 - Finding common ground
 - Working together

- Differences in culture bring a constant pulse of new ideas and innovations
- Gwinnett County recognizes all of the multiple partnerships and collaborations



How Will You Uphold the Gwinnett Standard?



The County's tagline, "**Vibrantly Connected,**" celebrates our dynamic community—filled with energy, creativity, and passion that weave through Gwinnett's schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, civic institutions, and County government.



10:15 am – 10:30 am



The Gwinnett Standard

The County's tagline, "**Vibrantly Connected,**" celebrates our dynamic community—filled with energy, creativity, and passion that weave through Gwinnett's schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, civic institutions, and County government.



Group Discussions

What is the best thing
that has ever
happened to you in
Gwinnett County?



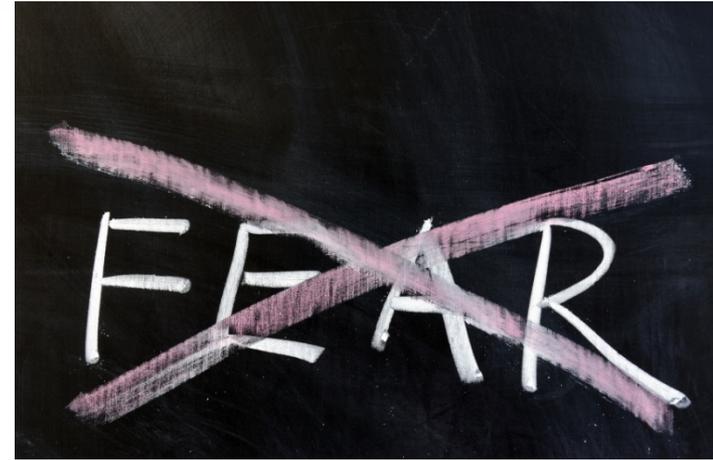
Group Discussions

What excites you about the coming year?

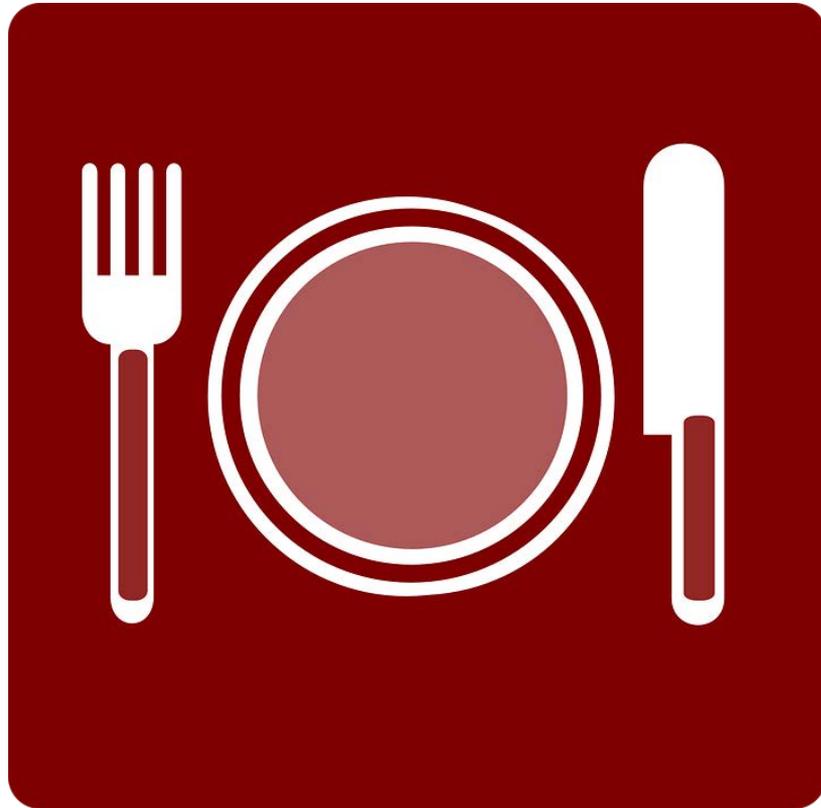


Group Discussions

As of today, what is your greatest fear as it pertains to your service to Gwinnett County?



Noon – 1:00 pm



Roles and Expectations

Questions to consider in order for you to be successful in your role as a commissioner:

- *As a commissioner, what do you need from your fellow commissioners to be successful?*
- *As a commissioner, what do you need from senior staff to be successful?*
- *As a commissioner, what can you contribute to the work of the County?*



Roles and Expectations

Questions to consider in order for you to be successful in your role as a senior staff member:

- *As a senior staff member, what do you need from commissioners to be successful?*
- *As a senior staff member, what do you need from each other to be successful?*
- *As a senior staff member, what can you contribute to the efforts of the County?*



Top Five Expectations



- *Consensus on Top Five Commission Expectations of Each Other*
- *Consensus on Top Five Commission Expectations of Senior Staff*
- *Consensus on Top Five Senior Staff Expectations of Each Other*
- *Consensus on Top Five Senior Staff Expectations of the Commission*



2:45 pm – 3:00 pm



Current Gwinnett County Vision, Mission, and Values

- Vision:

Gwinnett County sets the standard as a dynamic, vibrant community where all people can enjoy essential economic opportunities, safe neighborhoods, plentiful green space and recreational facilities. We are committed to partnering with others in our community who share a dedication to making life better for our citizens.

- Mission:

The Gwinnett County Government will deliver superior services in partnership with our community.

- Values:

We believe in honesty, fairness, and respect for all. We believe in stewardship of public resources and protection of the environment and that all citizens should expect to live and work in a clean and secure community.

We value excellence, creativity, innovation, and new technologies and ideas.

We believe that our government must be customer-focused, fiscally responsible, and deliver services that are among the best.



Vision, Mission, and Values

**What is your vision
for the future of
Gwinnett County?**



What is Your Mission?

- What is the **purpose** of the Board of Commissioners? What are the **needs or opportunities** that the Board of Commissioners was created to address?
- What is the **business** of the Board of Commissioners? What is the Board of Commissioners **doing or need to do** to address these needs or opportunities?



What are the Values of the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners?

What *principles or beliefs* guide your work?



Final Thoughts for the Day

- *Final Thoughts for the Day*
- *Hotel Check-in*
- *Dinner at 6pm*
- *Day 2 starts at 8:30 am with Breakfast*
- *Adjournment*
- *Thank you!*



The Gwinnett Standard

The County's tagline, "**Vibrantly Connected,**" celebrates our dynamic community—filled with energy, creativity, and passion that weave through Gwinnett's schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, civic institutions, and County government.



Welcome!

Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners

Strategic Planning Session

March 25-26, 2021



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Review of Vision, Mission and Values



Vision Statements

- Gwinnett sets the standard as a community where all individuals thrive.
- Gwinnett will be a model county where everyone thrives!
- Gwinnett is the preferred living experience.
- To be a welcoming, forward-thinking, accessibly and financially sound community.
- Gwinnett County aims to provide the most satisfying government experience.



Mission Statements

- Provide world-class services and provide economic opportunity for all.
- Gwinnett County proudly supports our vibrantly connected community by delivering superior services that are equitable and inclusive.
- To provide superior services in partnership with our community.
- To provide world-class services.
- Gwinnett will deliver superior services through innovation, inclusion, and infrastructure.



Core Values

- Financial stewardship
- Engagement
- Transparency
- Community focused
- Sustainable
- Accountable
- Trust
- Inclusive
- Environmentally responsible
- Integrity
- Compassionate
- Flexibility
- Welcoming
- Equitable
- Responsive
- Embracing
- Fiscally responsible
- Engaging
- Respect
- Truth
- Unity
- Stewardship and honesty
- Commitment
- Togetherness



10:00 am – 10:30 am Break and Hotel Check-out



Current Environment Assessment

- *What is working well?*
- *What needs improvement?*
- *What are current or future trends or needs the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners must be aware of?*



Identification of Priorities

Given the vision, mission, value statements, current environment, future trends, and needs, what are the priorities of the Board of Commissioners?

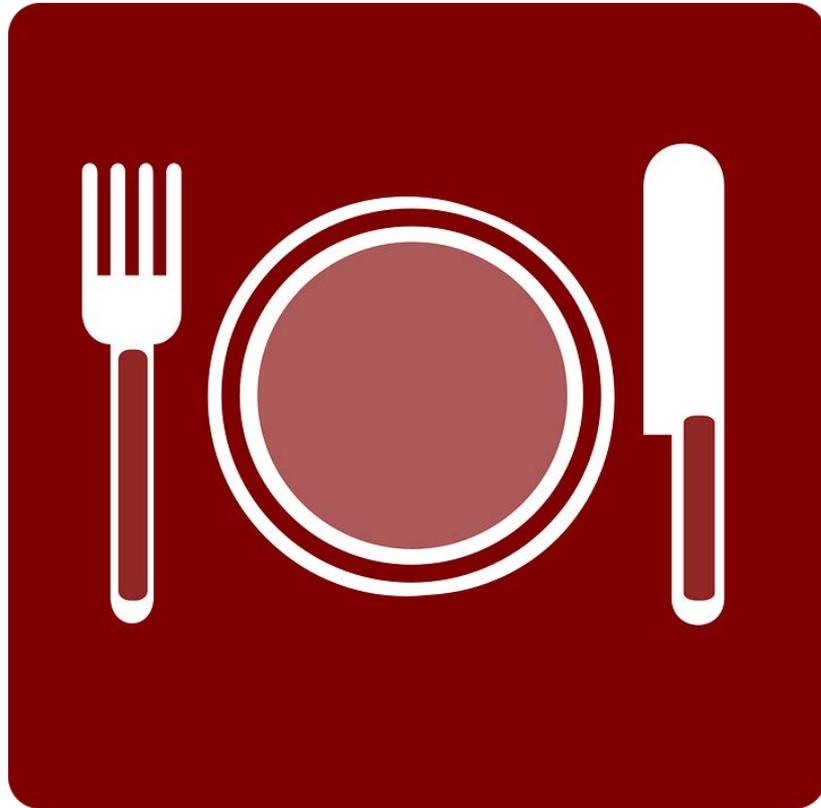


Priorities

- Attract & retain workforce, employee focus, recruit/retain quality workforce
- Infrastructure investment, asset management, growth & infrastructure (urbanization).
- Safe communities, social welfare, public health, safety, & welfare,
- Sustainability & stewardship, fiscal health of the County, maintain financial stability, service delivery cost analysis.
- Economic opportunities, attract high quality job creation/economic development
- Communication enhancement, enhanced communication, improved communication platforms inclusive of language
- Transportation, mobility and transit, develop transportation alternatives



Noon – 1:00 pm



The Gwinnett Standard

The County's tagline, "**Vibrantly Connected,**" celebrates our dynamic community—filled with energy, creativity, and passion that weave through Gwinnett's schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, civic institutions, and County government.



Vision Statement

*Gwinnett is the preferred
community where everyone
thrives!*



Mission Statement

Gwinnett proudly supports our vibrantly connected community by delivering superior services.



Value Statements

- **Integrity:** we believe in being honest and having strong moral principles.
- **Accountability:** we believe in stewardship, transparency, and sustainability.
- **Equity:** we believe in fairness and respect for all.
- **Inclusivity:** we believe in engaging, embracing, and unifying our communities.



You are the Standard Bearers!



Closing Remarks, Thoughts, and Forward Focus

- *Closing Remarks, Final Thoughts, and Forward Focus*
- *Reminder – Session evaluation link will be emailed to you*
- *Adjournment*



Thank you!

