



Gwinnett County Government Communications Division NEWS RELEASE

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PUBLIC HEARING SET FOR PROPOSED 2011 BUDGET

(Lawrenceville, Ga., Dec. 1, 2010) – Gwinnett County has published the proposed fiscal year 2011 budget and will hold a public hearing on Tuesday, Dec. 14, at 7 p.m. in the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center, 75 Langley Drive in Lawrenceville. The public is invited to make either oral or written comments about the budget during the hearing. The Board of Commissioners is expected to consider the 2011 budget during its regularly scheduled meeting on Jan. 4, 2011.

The budget, prepared with input from citizens who served alongside elected officials and staff on a budget review committee, is based upon departmental business plans and incorporates many recommendations from the Engage Gwinnett citizens committee. The proposed operating budget for fiscal year 2011 totals \$977.5 million. This represents a \$32 million decrease from the 2010 revised budget. The proposed capital budget for fiscal year 2011 is \$337.2 million, a \$216.6 million decrease, or 39.1 percent, from fiscal year 2010.

The proposed 2011 budget preserves core services but adds no new services. The only increases are due to state and federal mandates. The budget also includes voluntary departmental reductions of \$5.7 million, plus \$2.3 million in further service reductions. These reductions include a 15 percent reduction to libraries and a 50 percent reduction in subsidies to external agencies. Additionally, the County will continue to take actions throughout 2011 to balance the remaining \$18 million fiscal year 2011 deficit.

Declining real estate values combined with a tough economy have created budgetary challenges for local governments. Property tax is a vital source of revenue for the County that funds operational expenses such as public safety, courts, libraries and parks. Gwinnett County's tax digest decreased nearly nine percent in 2010 and is expected to contract by another nine percent in 2011. It will likely shrink again in 2012, further reducing operating revenues.

2010 Vice Chairman and District 1 Commissioner Shirley Lasseter said, "Dealing with the harsh reality facing us next year and in future years will not be easy, but the outlook will only worsen unless we continue to implement fiscally sound policies. Simply delaying the difficult decisions that lie ahead will limit viable solutions and threaten the future of our core county operations and infrastructure."

The complete budget document is available for public access at the Department of Financial Services, also at 75 Langley Drive, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and is available online at www.gwinnettcounty.com.

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