



GWINNETT PLACE COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

SPECIAL OP-ED

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Great Exchange on Transportation

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Transportation is the lifeblood of Gwinnett County's economy. It touches every aspect of our daily lives. Over the decades, Gwinnett County has invested millions of dollars into creating a road network that links businesses to their customers and suppliers and homes to schools, jobs, retail centers and recreational venues. Each improvement to the transportation system has resulted in enhancing the economic growth, opportunity and prosperity of the greater community. But, we can no longer rest on past successes. Future trends are clear. Across the nation and in the Atlanta metro region, people are raising their voices seeking greater mobility options going forward.

Time spent in traffic on I-85, SR 316, Highway 78 or any of our other congested roadways is time taken from our families, our friends, and our business and civic interests. For a business, congestion raises costs and cuts into the bottom line. Economists have found that the better the transportation system, there is an increase in economic output, income generation and growth. As an employer, I am hearing calls for changing the ways we travel and creating a transportation network for the 21st century. People are wanting to decrease their auto usage, while increasing opportunities for biking, walking and transit.

I believe our transportation infrastructure needs to change to keep up with the demands of residents and employers. We need to plan for a system that will meet the needs of an ever-changing and growing population that Gwinnett is sure to experience over the coming years. We must have a transportation system not based on the past, but we must begin deciding what our network will become for the next 25 years and beyond. We need to plan on a transportation network that offers greater mobility choices than the one we have today.

Creating jobs, keeping our economy strong will require us, as a community, to determine where we want to go and how we want to get there. Failing to plan for our transportation future will result in the loss of Gwinnett's competitive economic advantage and our superior quality of life. Gwinnett is a community that has always been on the move, reaching for the future, not afraid to embrace change and new ideas.

Now is the time to begin having a conversation about enhancing our economic productivity, connectivity and quality of life. I hope that you will join me in being a part of The Great Exchange (#thegr8exchange), a grassroots effort that will bring thousands of people together to discuss transportation over the course of this week. This is a first-of-its kind initiative to engage with people from all over Gwinnett County to share their views on the future of their community and the role transportation plays in shaping that future. Simply text "join" to 74029, and let's begin the journey to creating the next generation of roads, bridges, sidewalks and public transportation systems.