



**Media Contact:**  
Alyssa Eubanks  
Marketing Coordinator  
[ae@councilforqualitygrowth.org](mailto:ae@councilforqualitygrowth.org)  
770-813-3388

## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Chairwoman Nicole Love Hendrickson Delivers 2024 State of Gwinnett County Address**

*Crowd of 1,000+ Attends Annual Address at 12Stone Church in Lawrenceville*

GWINNETT COUNTY, GA – On Thursday, March 7, 2024, the [Council for Quality Growth](#) and the [Gwinnett Chamber](#) hosted the 2024 State of Gwinnett County at 12Stone Church in Lawrenceville. Over 1,000 Council and Chamber members, elected officials, businesses, residents, county staff, and partners of Gwinnett County gathered to hear the Chairwoman Nicole Love Hendrickson’s annual state of the county address. The breakfast program was presented by [Axis Companies](#) and [HNTB](#).

Chairwoman Hendrickson began her annual address by walking through a ‘door of opportunity’ on stage as she set the tone of her vision for Gwinnett. In the final year of her first term as Chair of the Gwinnett Board of Commissioners, Nicole Love Hendrickson is set upon maintaining the county’s status as a “benchmark community,” claiming it is her “greatest responsibility to ensure Gwinnett remains a community where potential and promise come together.” She highlighted the strength of the county by metrics of resident’s safety, financial strength, and overall quality of life. In the last year, the county has made intentional investments in public safety, balanced their budget with sufficient financial reserves, made historic investments in infrastructure, and maintained triple AAA bond ratings across the board. They’ve relieved the tax burden on residents with \$759 million in Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) revenue dedicated to quality-of-life projects in communities. The Chairwoman reported over 1,400 new jobs last year, and she highlighted initiatives to fight food insecurity, address mental health issues, and provide greater access to jobs. “Putting people first is not just a policy priority, but a moral imperative,” she stated. “Gwinnett is at its best when it is a place for everyone.”

Hendrickson made a bold statement on transit expansion in Gwinnett with the anticipated referendum on ballots this November. “We must focus on creating conditions that allow our residents to participate in the innovation of tomorrow,” she said, pointedly stating that access to jobs goes hand in hand with access to transit options. She highlighted the investments the county has already made in connectivity, including the recent launch of a micro-transit system and expansion of local Ride Gwinnett bus routes. Hendrickson said the coming transit referendum is a better plan than the failed efforts of the past. She envisions dedicated routes that take Gwinnett residents from their homes straight to Hartsfield-Jackson Airport. “We have an obligation to Gwinnett’s growth,” said the Chairwoman, “we must embrace it, shape it, and recognize that it requires us to act.”

Gwinnett County is projected to grow by more than half a million people in the next 25 years. Chairwoman Hendrickson knows that, in addition to transit expansion, creating housing affordability is key to embracing that growth. She’s worked with her Board of Commissioners on a “comprehensive overhaul” to the county’s Unified Development Ordinance, allowing for, and even incentivizing, new types of redevelopments for affordability. Gwinnett County welcomed its first community of tiny homes for families earning up to 80% AMI this past year in addition to the creation of more than 750 affordable units. “We won’t stop until everyone is safely housed,” said Hendrickson.

The Council for Quality Growth has worked closely with Gwinnett County over the last year on many of these tough quality of life issues and supports continued strategic investment into infrastructure, transit access, and housing options that contribute to the stability of future generations. “The Council commends the

leadership of Chairwoman Hendrickson and the Gwinnett Commission for implementing innovative policy solutions that propel this county and region forward,” said Michael Paris, President & CEO of the Council for Quality Growth.

“Chairwoman Hendrickson’s visionary approach has yielded tangible benefits for our business community,” added Nick Masino, President & CEO of the Gwinnet Chamber. The program also featured remarks from Katherine Zitsch, Deputy Chief Operating Officer of Atlanta Regional Commission, who provided an update on the regional stormwater management efforts of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District and applauded Gwinnett’s “decades of forward-thinking and strategic leaders.”

Chairwoman Hendrickson credits *opportunity* as what makes Gwinnett so special. “Sometimes opportunity isn’t obvious,” she said. “It’s developed, it’s pursued, it’s nurtured. It’s the decision we make every single day to keep the doorways of opportunity open for everyone and ensure the pathways to prosperity remain accessible to all who call Gwinnett home.”

The Council for Quality Growth annually partners with the Gwinnett Chamber to host the State of Gwinnett County and convene the county’s business community with its local government bodies and other leaders from across the metro Atlanta region.



*[From left: Michael Paris, Katherine Zitsch, Chairwoman Nicole Love Hendrickson, Nick Masino]*



*[Gwinnett County Chairwoman Nicole Love Hendrickson delivers her 2024 State of the County address.]*

A photo gallery will be available in the coming days at <https://www.councilforqualitygrowth.org/news-press/>.

### **About the State of the County/Agency Series**

The Council for Quality Growth hosts 10 ‘State of’ events across the region, including 8 counties and 2 agencies. We work in close collaboration with the office of the County Chairs in Cherokee, Clayton, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, and Rockdale, as well as with leadership at MARTA and the Atlanta BeltLine, to provide a platform for our counties and agency partners deliver an update on achievements, projects, and the future that is specifically geared toward the business community and the Council’s membership. A full calendar of the Council’s 2024 Signature Events, including the State of the County/Agency series, can be viewed and downloaded here: [2024 Programs Calendar](#)

### **About the Council for Quality Growth**

The Council for Quality Growth is a trade organization that works to ensure continued growth and economic success for generations to come by providing advocacy, information, and education to its members. In its 39<sup>th</sup> year, the Council is committed to the mission of promoting balanced and responsible growth and is proactively involved in the formulation of policy and legislation critical to the growth and development industry. The Council addresses, head-on, strategic economic planning, infrastructure needs, and tough quality-of-life issues throughout the metro Atlanta region and state. For more information, please visit <http://www.councilforqualitygrowth.org>.